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False alarm

Second recent nuclear missile alert blunder leaves Hawaiians shaken

Staff and wire reports

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — The second recent blunder in Hawaii's planning for a possible North Korean nuclear attack left islanders shaken Saturday after an emergency alert warning of an imminent strike sounded on hundreds of thousands of cellphones.

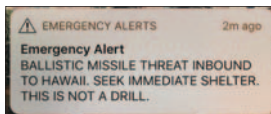
For nearly 40 minutes, people waited. Then came the second mobile alert: Someone hit the wrong button; there was no missile.

Some people abandoned cars on the highway, and others gathered in the interiors of their homes to wait for what seemed like the inevitable — a blast that would cause widespread death and destruction.

The message sent statewide just after 8



a.m. Saturday read: "BALLISTIC MISSILE THREAT INBOUND TO HAWAII. SEEK IMMEDIATE



SHELTER. THIS IS NOT A DRILL."

The alerts caused about 30 minutes of panic and confusion for those who received alerts on their cellphones. Not all mobile phones got the urgent warning, however, and 10 minutes into the alert, the streets of Waikiki Beach appeared calm, with tourists strolling and children playing.

Adding to the confusion was the fact that a statewide civil defense siren for a missile attack did not sound. Hawaii reinstituted the Cold War-era siren two months ago as tensions ratcheted up with North Korea, which has been testing

SEE SHAKEN
ON PAGE 4

New clinic in Tijuana aids deported vets

By NIKKI WENTLING
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — For five years, deported Army veteran Hector Barajas-Varela has been fighting one of America's largest bureaucracies. Now, he's seeing some payoff for the deported vets he advocates for in Tijuana, Mexico.

The Department of Veterans Affairs' newly established clinic

in Tijuana just began giving exams to determine whether deported veterans have injuries or illnesses connected to their military service. If they do, they could become eligible for government-paid health care and monthly paychecks from the VA.

"This is definitely important," Barajas, 40, said. "It's huge for them to do something specifically for deported veterans."

In 2013, Barajas founded the Deported Veterans Support House in Tijuana, which provides food, shelter and clothing for veterans removed from the U.S. who have little access to health care or other services available to veterans stateside. Barajas has connected with about 70 deported veterans in the Tijuana area, and he believes many of them will set appointments through the clinic. A few veterans already have had exams and are waiting to hear about their eligibility.

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'This is definitely important. It's huge for them to do something specifically for deported veterans.'

Hector Barajas-Varela
deported Army veteran



Barajas

Diamond Head, an extinct volcanic crater, seen behind high-rises in Honolulu on Saturday. A push alert that warned of an incoming ballistic missile to Hawaii and sent residents into a full-blown panic was a mistake, state emergency officials said.

AUDREY McAVOY/AP

MILITARY

Wasp joins 7th Fleet in Japan

By TYLER HLAIVAC
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The USS Wasp has arrived at its new homeport in Japan, bolstering the 7th Fleet's amphibious and stealth-attack capabilities in the Pacific.

The amphibious assault ship — which some have dubbed a mini aircraft carrier because of upgrades that allow it to host the next-generation F-35B Lightning II stealth fighter — and its crew of approximately 1,100 pulled into Sasebo Naval Base on Sunday after a five-month journey from Norfolk, Va.

It will replace the USS Bonhomme Richard as the flagship of Task Force 76. The bulk of the ships in the 7th Fleet's amphibious force are based in Sasebo.

"The arrival of USS Wasp rep-

resents an increase in military capability and a commitment to our partners and allies for security and stability in the region,"

Capt. Colby Howard, the ship's commander, said in a Navy statement. "Paired with the F-35B Joint Strike Fighter, we remain ready to execute the full range of military operations from crisis response to disaster relief."

F-35Bs, which are capable of short takeoffs and vertical landings, will embark on the Wasp when it departs for its next regional patrol, the statement added. The stealth jets are flown by Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 121, which arrived last year at nearby Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni.

The Wasp can embark more than 1,600 Marines. The 844-foot flattop ship employs 31 aircraft, as well as Marine amphibious

craft out of its well deck.

Not long after its August departure from Norfolk, the Wasp was diverted to the Caribbean to assist with relief efforts in the U.S. Virgin Islands and Dominica after Hurricane Irma. It was then tapped to provide aid to Puerto Rico after the island was struck by Hurricane Maria.

Its aircraft flew 108 missions in the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico, totaling 385 hours of flight time and moving 1,129 passengers along with 26,720 pounds of equipment and 1,718,200 pounds of various logistical support items, including 328,100 pounds of food and water, a Navy statement said.

The Wasp resumed its voyage to Japan in October, with stops in Brazil and Hawaii along the way. It also conducted drills during the transit that covered damage control, combat systems, aviation and



DAVID KROBAUN/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

The amphibious-assault ship USS Wasp, background, pulls into Sasebo Naval Base, Japan, beside the USS Bonhomme Richard on Sunday.

casualty response, the Navy said.

The Bonhomme Richard, which has been homeported at Sasebo since April 2012, will remain there for an undetermined period before heading to its new home in

San Diego, where it will undergo maintenance and upgrades. It is slated to participate in the Thailand-based exercise Cobra Gold next month.

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Correction

Rep. Jim Langevin, of Rhode Island, the ranking Democrat of the House Armed Services Committee subpanel on emerging threats and capabilities, said Wednesday that despite congressional and Department of Defense efforts, other nation-state actors have made advances in emerging technological areas that endanger U.S. technological superiority. The congressman's first name was incorrect in Thursday's edition of Stars and Stripes.

Air bag recall could affect Japan-based troops

By SETH ROBSON
Stars and Stripes

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — A significant number of vehicles owned by U.S. personnel in Japan may be affected by a recall of millions of faulty air bag inflators.

The vehicles might not pass mandatory inspections because they're fitted with potentially dangerous Takata air bags, U.S. Forces Japan's public affairs operations chief said in a Jan. 4 email to safety personnel.

The Japanese air bag maker, which has already recalled faulty inflators for close to 40 million vehicles, is recalling an additional 3.3 million as it expands the largest automotive recall in U.S. history, The Associated Press reported last week.

The latest recall covers front air bags in certain 2009, 2010 and 2013 vehicles made by Honda, Toyota, Audi, BMW, Daimler Vans, Fiat Chrysler, Ford, General Motors, Jaguar-Land Rover, Mazda, Mercedes-Benz, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Subaru and Tesla, the report said.

Malfunctioning Takata air bags have been known to spray drivers and passengers with shrapnel from exploding metal canisters. Twenty people have been killed and more than 180 injured, according to the AP.

In the USFJ email, Marine Corps Gunnery Sgt. Rick Nelson said the Japanese government had indicated that affected vehicles that haven't had their air bags replaced won't pass inspections and can't be registered after May 1.

"Installation Safety Offices will be working

with local Land Transportation Offices to map out the plan to inform the base public and provide options for having the vehicle checked at a local dealer," he said.

In a follow-up email, 5th Air Force safety superintendent Joshua Miller said a "significant number" of vehicles owned and operated by USFJ personnel are affected.

"The recall appears to be sponsored by the original manufacturers and 'should' not incur costs on our USFJ personnel for repair/correction/inspection/recertification," he said.

Miller encouraged personnel to spread the word that vehicles may not pass inspection until the condition has been corrected.

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PACIFIC

‘Significant’ work seen at N. Korean nuke site

By AARON KIDD
Stars and Stripes

“Significant” tunneling work has been detected at North Korea’s Punggye-ri nuclear test site, according to a Washington-based think tank that monitors the communist state’s activities.

A report issued Thursday by 38 North says the activity — spotted in satellite images taken last month — underscores Pyongyang’s efforts to maintain the site despite news that tunnel collapses killed several hundred people there after its sixth

and most powerful nuclear test Sept. 3.

While work remains dormant at the “North Portal,” which is the site of the past five underground blasts, the satellite images show that excavation work at the “West Portal” has been “stepped up,” said 38 North, which is run by Johns Hopkins University’s School of Advanced International Studies.

“Throughout December 2017, mining carts and personnel were consistently present around the West Portal and there was significant expansion of the spoil pile,” the report said. “On December 28, there

were also a large number of personnel observed in seven different formations whose purpose is unknown in the Southern Support Area.”

38 North said it is rare to see people in that support area, and the purpose of their activities is unknown.

Water was seen draining from the north portal’s entrance, the report said, adding that no other significant activity was observed at Punggye-ri’s other facilities.

38 North’s report came the same week that North Korea agreed to send athletes and officials to next month’s Winter Olymp-

pics in the South and to discuss easing military hostilities.

A high-profile meeting with the South in the truce village of Panmunjom was held Tuesday after more than two years of crisis over North Korea’s nuclear weapons progress, beginning with the communist state’s fourth nuclear test in January 2016. Since then, the North has conducted two other nuclear tests and has test-fired dozens of missiles, most recently an ICBM on Nov. 29.

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IAN COTTER/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

Training day

Blue Angels slot pilot Navy Lt. Cmdr. Nate Scott taxis onto the flight line during a winter training session at Naval Air Facility El Centro, Calif. The Blue Angels are scheduled to perform more than 60 demonstrations at more than 30 locations across the U.S. in 2018.

US commander apologizes for stray ammo outside South Korea complex

By KIM GAMEL
Stars and Stripes

SEOUL, South Korea — A top U.S. commander has apologized to a South Korean mayor for stray ammunition rounds found outside a sprawling training complex near the tense frontier that divides the peninsula.

Lt. Gen. Michael Bills, the 8th Army’s new commander, made the comments Thursday during an office call with the mayor of Pocheon, the area that is home to Rodriguez Live Fire Range.

“During the meeting he apologized for the Jan. 3 incident that resulted in several ammunition rounds being found in a [South Korean army] motorpool” near the U.S. complex, the 8th Army public affairs office told Stars and

Stripes on Friday in an email.

“He reinforced that the safety of the citizens of our host nation is a top priority,” it added.

More than 10 .50-caliber rounds were discovered at the South Korean base, weeks after the U.S. command hosted a town-hall meeting in Pocheon to address public outrage after a bullet from the range was found inside a local home in November.

The U.S. and South Korean militaries have launched a joint investigation into the incidents.

The 3,900-acre complex, which is used for live-fire drills and other exercises just miles from the border with North Korea, has frequently been a source of frustration for local residents who complain about the noise and other problems, including a fire

that broke out last year.

The mayor, Kim Jong-cheon, was quoted as calling for a special law that would ensure safety measures in the vicinity of the range.

The 8th Army said Bills “committed to personally briefing the mayor on the results of the investigation and implementing new measures to improve safety on the range.”

U.S. Forces Korea is in the process of moving the bulk of its soldiers and civilian employees to regional hubs south of Seoul as part of a long-delayed relocation plan. But Rodriguez and other training areas near the border will remain open.

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Japan protests after sub, Chinese frigate sail near Senkakus

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND HANA KUSUMOTO
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Japan has complained to China after a pair of vessels sailed last week near disputed islands in the East China Sea.

Vice Foreign Minister Shinzuke Sugiyama lodged protests Thursday and Friday to China’s ambassador to Japan, a Ministry of Foreign Affairs statement said. The incursions happened Wednesday and Thursday in Japan’s contiguous zone around Okinawa and the Senkaku Islands by a Chinese frigate and a submarine presumed to be from China, Japanese officials said.

Sugiyama expressed “great concern” over the provocations and strongly urged China not to hinder efforts to improve the countries’ relationship. He also called sending a submarine to the area a “unilateral escalation in new form” and urged China not to do it again.

The Senkakus — an uninhabited chain surrounded by resource-rich waters between Okinawa and Taiwan — are claimed by Japan, Taiwan and China, which refers to them as Diaoyu.

The U.S. has long declined to take a position on the islands’ sovereignty; however, Presidents Barack Obama and Donald Trump both have declared that the Senkakus will be protected under the U.S.-Japan security alliance.

“Senkaku is Japan’s territory and territorial waters internationally and historically, and Japan’s claim about the contiguous zone is absolutely correct,” Defense Minister Hasegawa Onodera told reporters Friday morning.

The Japanese military first observed a submarine of unknown origin entering the contiguous zone just outside its territorial waters northeast of Miyako Island on Wednesday evening, a Ministry of Defense statement said.

The submarine’s presence was confirmed by a Japan Maritime

Self-Defense Force escort ship and a P-3C aircraft, the statement said. The sub exited the contiguous zone and headed toward the Senkakus on Thursday morning. It then re-entered the contiguous zone around Taisho Island, which is part of the Senkakus, before leaving that afternoon.

A Chinese navy frigate was spotted Thursday morning entering the contiguous zone northeast of Taisho Island, the statement said. It left Thursday afternoon.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe responded to the incidents Thursday by giving instructions to prepare for all possible contingencies and to coordinate closely with the U.S., according to a statement released by his Cabinet.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga told reporters Thursday that Japan will “definitely defend our territory, territorial waters and airspace.” A Defense Ministry spokesman declined to discuss the measures being taken.

Chinese officials defended the move Thursday, saying that the Senkakus are China’s territory and that the incident was instigated by two Japanese navy vessels.

“The [Diaoyu Islands] are a natural part of Chinese territory,” Lu Kang, Beijing’s Foreign Ministry spokesman, said Thursday, according to UPI. “China’s decision to guard the sovereignty of the [Diaoyu] territory is unshaken.”

Maritime confrontations and jet interceptions between China and Japan have become common place in recent years, especially around the Senkakus. Five submarines have been spotted entering Japan’s contiguous zone since 2013, a Defense Ministry spokesman said. A Chinese frigate was last seen in the contiguous zone in June 2016.

The Japan Coast Guard said Chinese ships entered Japanese waters 114 times last year.

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MILITARY

Shaken: Many say they realize there is little they can do if missile launched

FROM FRONT PAGE

ballistic missiles and at times threatened to launch one at Hawaii or Guam.

The siren is now tested once a month.

U.S. Pacific Command spokesman Cmdr. David Benham sent out an email blast to journalists soon after the alert saying PACOM had detected no ballistic missile threat to Hawaii and that the message had been sent in error.

The White House said President Donald Trump, at his private club in Florida, was briefed on the false alert. White House spokeswoman Lindsay Walters said it "was purely a state exercise."

The Hawaii Emergency Management Agency's administrator, Vern Miyagi, said he took responsibility for the mistake. He said officials would study the error to make sure it doesn't happen again.

The state adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Joe Logan, said a written report would be prepared. State lawmakers announced they would hold a hearing next Friday. And Federal Communications Commission Chairman Ajit Pai said on social media the panel would launch an investigation.

The backlash from lawmakers was swift. Hawaii House Speaker Scott Saiki said the system Hawaii residents have been told to rely on failed miserably.

"Clearly, government agencies are not prepared and lack the capacity to deal with emergency situations," he said in a statement.

Hawaii U.S. Sen. Brian Schatz tweeted that the false alarm was "totally inexcusable."

"There needs to be tough and quick accountability and a fixed process," he wrote.

"This false alert is detrimental to the integrity and trust of the emergency management system," said state Sen. Donna Mercado Kim.

About 10 minutes after the initial alert, the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency tweeted there was no threat, but that didn't reach people who aren't on the social media platform. A mobile alert informing people of the false alarm didn't reach cellphones until about 40 minutes later.

Many people said they are resigned to the fact that there is little they can do if a missile was to be launched toward the remote island chain, especially with only about 15 minutes of warning time for a strike from North Korea.

Joseph Kira was home with his kids when the alert came. His wife was at the gym.

"My wife was going ballistic," he said. "At that point, you just pray and find God, I guess."

On the H-3, a major highway

north of Honolulu, vehicles sat empty after panicked drivers ran to a nearby tunnel for shelter, the Honolulu Star-Advertiser reported. Workers at a golf club huddled in a kitchen, fearing the worst.

Professional golfer Colt Knost, staying at Waikiki Beach during a PGA Tour event, said "everyone was panicking" in the lobby of his hotel. "Everyone was running around like, 'What do we do?'" he said.

With the threat of missiles from North Korea on people's minds, the state reintroduced the Cold War-era warning siren tests last month that drew international attention. But there were problems there, too.

Even though the state says nearly 93 percent of the islands' 386 sirens worked properly during

the December test, 12 mistakenly played an ambulance siren. In the tourist hub of Waikiki, the sirens were barely audible, prompting officials to add more sirens there and reposition ones already in place.

Mary Hirose was with her children at an ice skating arena in Honolulu when the alert came Saturday.

"Here, there is nothing you can do," she said. So she grabbed her four children held them close, listened to the news and hoped for the best.

She questioned why it took the Civil Defense so long to send out the all-clear and why they tweeted before sending a mobile push alert.

Hawaii officials apologized repeatedly and said the alert was sent when someone hit the live

alert button instead of an internal test button during a shift change.

"Today is a day that most of us will never forget," said Hawaii Gov. David Ige. "A day when many in our community thought that our worst nightmare might actually be happening. A day when many frantically tried to think about the things that they would do if a ballistic missile launch would happen."

The agency did not have a plan for a false alarm in place, officials said.

Ige called the mistake unacceptable. "I am sorry for the pain and confusion it caused," he said. "I, too, am extremely upset about this."

Stars and Stripes reporter Wyatt Olson contributed to this report. The Associated Press also contributed.

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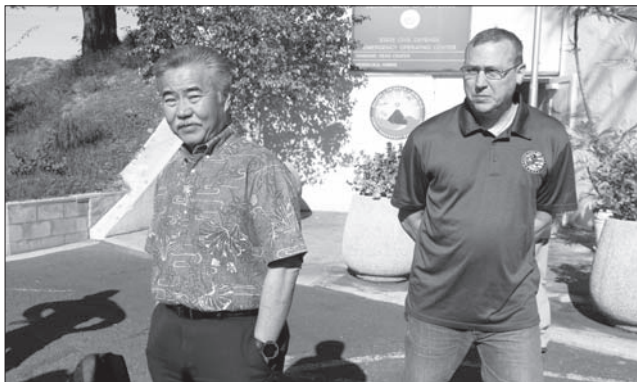
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GEORGE F. LEE, THE HONOLULU STAR-ADVERTISER/AP

Hawaii Gov. David Ige, left, and Maj. Gen. Joe Logan attend a press conference at the Civil Defense department at Diamond Head on Honolulu on Saturday.

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US sticking to ICBM test flights amid North Korea tensions

By TONY CAPACCIO

Bloomberg

The U.S. Air Force is going ahead with two long-planned flight tests of intercontinental ballistic missiles next month despite efforts to dampen tensions over North Korea's nuclear ambitions and encourage fragile talks with South Korea.

Test launches of American missiles — without the nuclear warheads they can deliver — would be unlikely to cause much of a stir under regular circumstances. But they may prove sensitive coming the same month as the Winter Olympics, which are to be hosted by South Korea beginning Feb. 9. North Korea has agreed to send its athletes, and the U.S. has postponed joint military exercises with South Korea that normally would begin next month.

There are two launches currently scheduled for February that have been scheduled for three to five years" to test the reliability and accuracy of the Minuteman III missiles, according to Capt. Anastasia Schmidt, a spokeswoman for the Air Force Global Strike Command, which manages ICBMs and long-range bombers.



ANDREW HARRER/Bloomberg

A B-2 stealth bomber sits in an aircraft hangar at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland.

Schmidt said the potential range of dates for tests "are typically not released this far in advance." She referred more specific questions to Air Force Space Command, but a spokesman there didn't provide a comment.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, who has vowed to develop

nuclear-armed ICBMs that can hit the U.S. mainland, began the new year boasting that he has a "nuclear button" on his desk. President Donald Trump countered on Twitter that his nuclear button was "much bigger and more powerful."

Trump has since encouraged

the limited talks between the two Koreas, calling them a "big start" and saying it would be "great for humanity" if something beyond cooperation in the winter games resulted.

"U.S. ICBM tests would be an irritant and a propaganda opportunity for North Korea, but by themselves they should not derail talks or the prospects for reducing tensions," said Joseph Cirincione, president of San Francisco-based Ploughshares Fund, which seeks to reduce nuclear weapon stockpiles. "The North Koreans care much more about the conventional military exercises on their border than ICBM tests."

Last year, the U.S. conducted four reliability tests of the Minuteman III. In the most recent one, on Aug. 2, a missile carrying a telemetry package used for operational testing traveled about 4,200 miles, from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California to the Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshall Islands, the Air Force Space Command said in a statement.

As many as four test-launches are scheduled each fiscal year "to determine and verify accuracy and reliability of the ICBM weapon system," the Strike Command

said in a statement.

The Air Force confirmed Thursday that it has deployed three B-2 stealth bombers to Guam. Lt. Gen. Kenneth McKenzie Jr., staff director for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told reporters at the Pentagon that "you would be wrong to view the bomber deployment within the single lens of what it means to the Korean Peninsula. It affects allies across the Pacific."

Still, the Pentagon's moves send a signal that even amid efforts to dial back tensions, the U.S. remains "ready to fight tonight" if necessary, Pentagon spokeswoman Dana White said Thursday, invoking a slogan of American forces in South Korea.

The U.S. "should not provoke a crisis with North Korea, nor should it shut down its routine military activity for fear of offending North Korea," said Sue Mi Terry, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and a former senior CIA analyst on Korean issues. "It's hard to imagine any connection between these fully lawful, routine tests and the current crisis over North Korea."

The U.S. "should not provoke a crisis with North Korea, nor should it shut down its routine military activity for fear of offending North Korea," said Sue Mi Terry, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies and a former senior CIA analyst on Korean issues. "It's hard to imagine any connection between these fully lawful, routine tests and the current crisis over North Korea."

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MILITARY

Officials, users tell of snags as Tricare overhaul begins

By COREY DICKSTEIN
Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The military's largest overhaul to its Tricare health care system in two decades began Jan. 1, promising users expanded access to health care and simplified out-of-pocket rates for visiting doctors, but the changes have come with system failures and snags, officials and users have reported.

Since Jan. 1, servicemembers, their families and veterans attempting to use Tricare have reported difficulties connecting to online systems and long waits to speak with customer service representatives by phone about the problems. Tricare's Facebook page, as of Friday, was riddled with dozens of complaints from users who detailed long periods on hold, dropped phone calls and difficulties registering on the new websites run by Tricare contractors.

In 2016, Congress mandated an overhaul of Tricare, the government-managed military health care program administered by the Pentagon, citing rising costs to the Defense Department and a need for greater flexibility for medical care for Tricare users. In that year's National Defense Authorization Act, Congress authorized about \$440 million for the Pentagon to reform the Tricare system, which provides coverage to some 9.4 million active-duty and reserve servicemembers, their family members and veterans.

Tricare officials on Thursday pledged the issues would be worked out, placing the blame for the website problems on the contractors — Humana Military and HealthNet Federal Services — who are "working diligently" to fix them, according to a Tricare statement that said the websites would be "fully functioning soon."

The customer service issues were largely blamed on a massive influx of tens of thousands of

calls per day from users seeking information about the changes to Tricare, the statement added.

"In an attempt to resolve inquiries in one call, call center staff are spending a longer time with beneficiaries," the Tricare statement reads, stating they aimed to answer all calls to customer service within 30 seconds. "There has been noticeable improvements (sic) in the last few days, and they are expected to improve even more in the coming days."

The changes to Tricare include new contractors running the health systems, a blending of two old coverage options into a new one, an adjustment to how customers' copayments are calculated and an increase next month in the out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs for users who are not on active duty.

On Jan. 1, Tricare shifted from three coverage regions to two as Tricare North, South and West became Tricare East and West. That means all users, other than ones previously in the Tricare South area, are now under new Tricare management contractors. For people in Tricare West that contractor is HealthNet and for people in Tricare East that is Humana, according to the Defense Health Agency, the Pentagon agency that manages Tricare.

Tricare officials said the change would allow for greater coordination between military hospitals and clinics and civilian health care providers within those regions. However, they acknowledged it could also mean some users would have to change their civilian doctors if those doctors do not opt in to the new system.

Another major change is the merging of the former Tricare Standard and Tricare Extra plans for dependents of active-duty servicemembers into a single, new coverage plan called Tricare Select. The new program largely mirrors the former plans, according to Tricare, allowing users greater freedom of choice of doctors than Tricare Prime,

a standard option for active-duty servicemembers and their families.

Tricare Prime will not change under the new system. HealthNet and Humana will select primary care managers for the users. Under Tricare Select, users can choose their own medical providers, but they will pay more out of pocket to see providers outside of their networks, according to Tricare.

Additionally, Tricare has moved to a standard out-of-pocket fee for users who visit civilian health care providers, as opposed to its previous system that required patients to contribute copayments of 15 to 20 percent of their bills. For example, family members of active-duty servicemembers on the new Tricare Select plan would pay \$21 out of pocket for a visit to a primary care doctor, according to Defense Health Agency documents. The same patient would pay a \$31 copayment for a specialty care visit and an \$81 copayment for an emergency room visit.

Military retirees and their families on the Tricare Select plan would pay \$28 for a primary care visit, according to the documents. They would pay \$49 for a specialty care visit and \$101 for an emergency room visit.

Beginning in the fall, Tricare also will change the time of year for its open enrollment season, moving to a calendar-year system similar to most civilian health insurance options.

The open enrollment season will begin on the Monday of the second full week in November and will run through the Monday of the second full week in December, allowing all beneficiaries to make changes to their coverage options during that period. It also allows for users to change their coverage options following qualifying significant life events, such as marriages, changes in military status or having children.

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Soldiers praise lightweight, anti-armor AT-4 weapon

By MARTIN EGNASH
Stars and Stripes

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — The AT-4 may be a disposable, low-cost alternative to more robust anti-tank systems, but it's a crowd favorite. Weighing in at less than 15 pounds, the light, single-shot weapon is a very popular piece of Army equipment.

The AT-4, built by Sweden's Saab Bofors Dynamics, was introduced into the U.S.' arsenal in 1983 and has been applauded by soldiers for its sheer simplicity and the sensation they get from firing it.

"Firing the AT-4 is a rush, to me," said Spc. Elliot Cason, an infantryman with the Army's 2nd Cavalry Regiment. "It's louder than you think it will be, but it's awesome when you hear and feel the 'boom' as the projectile explodes from the tube."

That "boom" from the 440-gram HEAT, or High Explosive Anti-Tank, round zipping out of the lightweight, Fiberglas tube at 950 feet per second has proved to be unforgettable.

"I remember my first time firing an AT-4," Cason said. "I was conducting a company-level live fire ... I was excited, (and) it took me a few seconds longer to line up the sights than normal. And when I pressed the trigger, feeling it kick as it sailed to the target, and the rush of adrenaline as it hit its mark, was awesome."

One of the reasons so many soldiers enjoy firing the AT-4 is because of its ease of use, said Sabab. On its website that the disposable weapon does not even require an expert gunner to operate it. "You simply aim, fire, destroy the target and discard the empty tube," it says.

It also can be used against buildings or fortifications or against exposed infantry.

However, this little tube of destruction is not without its drawbacks. "Compared to many modern shoulder-launched weapons, the AT-4 is a relatively short-range, unguided weapon," said John Gelsinger, a senior research engineer at the Rand Corp. "It is much less capable than the Army's Javelin, which can operate at



ALEJANDRO PENIA
Courtesy of the U.S. Air Force

A soldier handles an AT-4 light anti-armor weapon during live-fire training in October at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska.

much longer ranges. However, it is much cheaper and still a relatively versatile weapon."

The AT-4 also lacks the kind of stopping power that heavier anti-armor systems have. Still, most soldiers like it anyway.

"I like that it gives me a sense of security, knowing that we have the capability to take on more than just dismounted troops. However, it does not give us the ability to take on all armored vehicles," said Cason. "Regardless, I think it's an excellent weapon to have in the army. It's very versatile, and it adds to what a well-trained infantry squad can accomplish."

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Weather delays departure of USS Michael Murphy

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

FORT SHAFTER, Hawaii — The scheduled departure Friday of the USS Michael Murphy from Pearl Harbor was delayed due to bad weather conditions at sea.

The Hawaii-based destroyer had been slated to sail from its homeport to join the Carl Vinson strike group in the Western Pacific.

The group, which includes the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson, the guided-missile cruiser USS Lake Champlain and the guided-missile destroyer USS Wayne E. Meyer — departed its homeport of San Diego last week.

A new underway date for the Michael Murphy has not been determined, the Navy said.

Meanwhile, the guided-missile destroyer

USS Chafee returned home Friday to Pearl Harbor after completing an independent deployment to the Western Pacific and waters near South America, the Navy said. While at sea, the Chafee conducted theater security cooperation and maritime presence operations with other Pacific nations.

With a crew of almost 350, the Chafee is designed to operate either independently or as part of a strike group. A maintenance crew and pilots from Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron 37 served as air support for the ship during the deployment.

Its crew recovered nearly a ton of illicit narcotics while patrolling 41st Fleet waters, the Navy said. The Chafee also was integrated into Carrier Strike Group 5 in support of the USS Ronald Reagan's patrol of the 7th Fleet

area of responsibility.

The Chafee was ported for 10 days in December in Singapore for maintenance in an arrangement that allowed the ship to get needed fixes outside Hawaii and Japan, the Navy said.

The ship is part of U.S. Naval Surface Forces and the 3rd Fleet, which leads Pacific naval forces. It was named after the late Sen. John Lester Hubbard Chafee, a Marine veteran who fought in the Battle of Guadalcanal during World War II and served as Navy secretary from 1969 to 1972.

Its last deployment to the Western Pacific and South America was in 2015.

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MILITARY

Clinic: Advocate says lawmakers' involvement likely spurred opening of site

FROM FRONT PAGE

Veterans can get general medical exams at the clinic as well as exams for hearing and mental health problems. Each will receive a disability rating, which is necessary for obtaining VA benefits. If they are service-connected through the VA, the vets can get medical expenses reimbursed through the VA's Foreign Medical Program.

Before establishing a location in Tijuana, the VA had sites in Mexico City and Guadalajara, Mexico, to help vets determine their eligibility for benefits. But each one is more than 1,300 miles away, and veterans struggled to find the money to go.

"It was impossible for some of these guys to pay for a ticket and get where they needed to," Barajas said. "It's much easier to be able to get an exam here."

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus said there are about 3,000 cases in which veterans have been deported to countries around the world, though the U.S. government doesn't track them.

Noncitizens who serve in the U.S. military are granted the right to citizenship, but they must apply for it — a requirement some advocates and lawmakers believe isn't made clear to servicemen. Veterans who haven't attained citizenship can be deported if they are convicted of certain infractions, including drug crimes, domestic violence and voter fraud.

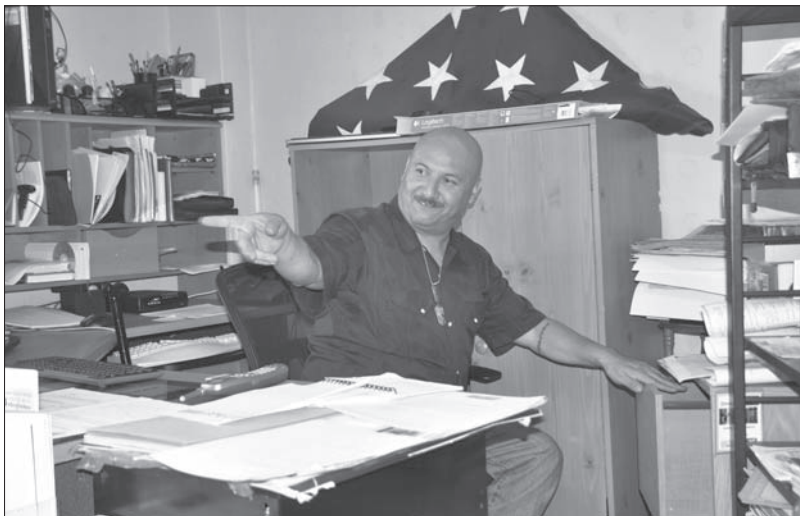
The VA did not respond to a request for comment on the decision to establish the site in Tijuana. But Barajas said it likely was made now, after five years of advocacy, because of the involvement of members of Congress.

"When we started doing this in 2013, there was no pressure from anybody, nobody pushing it legislatively," Barajas said. "What happened in the last year, Congress got involved — and I think that's what made the difference."

The 31-member Congressional Hispanic Caucus, as well as Democrats on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, took up the issue last year and traveled to Tijuana to meet with deported veterans. They've introduced multiple bills aiming to have the government better inform service-members of citizenship opportunities and fast-track their status, and to allow veterans to temporarily return to the U.S. to receive health care at VA facilities.

While the legislation has made little progress in Congress, the lawmakers went directly to the VA and the Department of Homeland Security, pleading with leaders to stop deporting veterans. Short of that, they've asked the VA for more aid for veterans already removed.

Rep. Mark Takano, D-Calif., a Democrat on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, announced last week the decision by the VA to establish a clinic in Tijuana. The VA made the decision in late November, Takano's office said, just days after Demo-



PHOTOS BY DIANNA CARR/Stars and Stripes

Deported veteran Hector Barajas-Varela works in June 2016 at the shelter he founded in Tijuana, Mexico.



Graffiti on the fence demarcating the border between Tijuana, Mexico, and San Diego has been painted with the names of deported American veterans.

crats held a news conference rallying for help for deported veterans.

"With access to compensation and pension exams, deported veterans will finally

have access to the financial benefits they are owed and the health care they need for conditions related to their service," Takano said in a written statement.

Multiple members of the House VA committee and the Hispanic Caucus said in written statements that they viewed this as a first step, with the final goal being readmittance into the U.S. for deported veterans. They called the deportation of honorably discharged veterans "shameful," "ridiculous" and "sickening."

"The establishment of an examination location in Tijuana was long overdue," said Rep. Juan Vargas, D-Calif., a member of the Hispanic Caucus. "We must keep working in Congress to ensure that deported veterans have access to the benefits and the health care services they need and bring deported veterans home."

The progress has come at what could be the end of Barajas' time in Tijuana. He was pardoned by California Gov. Jerry Brown in April for the crime of shooting at a car. The pardon is not a guarantee that he can return to the U.S., but it could help him with an appeal to immigration authorities. He submitted an application for citizenship, and he hopes to hear back about his status within the next couple of months, he said.

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Suit: SC VA hospital flubs sample, tells sick man he's a cocaine addict

By JOHN MONK

The COLUMBIA, S.C. Staff

COLUMBIA, S.C. — When U.S. Navy veteran Eric Walker went to the emergency room at Columbia's Dorn Veterans Hospital with severe pains in his abdomen, he was asked to provide a urine sample.

To Walker's surprise, medical staffers told him after an hour that he had flunked the hospital's standard drug test.

"Dorn Emergency Room per-

sonnel informed (Walker) that his stomach pains were a direct result of ingesting multiple illegal drugs, in particular, excessive cocaine," according to a lawsuit that Walker has filed in U.S. District Court in Columbia. The lawsuit filed in December says Walker's urine sample was switched with that of another patient, The Associated Press reported.

Instead of treating Walker for his abdominal pains, the hospital told him to go home and try to free him-

self from being a cocaine addict.

"Dorn promptly discharged (Walker) and offered him pamphlets relating to one's treatment of substance abuse," the lawsuit says.

At home, Walker grew more ill. After several days, he was driven to Lexington Medical Center by a neighbor, said Walker's attorney, Todd Lyle, of Columbia.

At Lexington Medical Center, Walker was "promptly diagnosed and rushed to emergency surgery for gall stones and disease of the

gall bladder and pancreas," Lyle said.

Walker, 47, was in the Navy from 1989 to 1993, serving a six-month tour in the Persian Gulf as part of Operation Desert Shield in the Persian Gulf War. An enlisted man, he was part of the crew of a guided missile ship.

"The Dorn VA Hospital provides a valuable service to our veterans, and our community is enhanced by this medical provider," Lyle said. "However, Eric's story is why we

must be ever vigilant to protect our veterans."

Walker recovered. However, his lawsuit seeks unspecified damages for his Lexington Medical bills from his surgeries, as well as for his pain and suffering.

Dorn did not respond Friday to a query about the lawsuit. The U.S. Attorney's office in Columbia, whose lawyers likely will represent Dorn and the Veterans Administration in the case, said it does not comment on pending litigation.

WAR ON TERRORISM



Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan waves to supporters of his ruling Justice and Development Party at a rally in Bingöl, eastern Turkey, on Saturday.

Turkey vows assault on Kurdish enclave

By ZEYNEP BILGINSON
Associated Press

ISTANBUL — Turkey's president said Sunday the country will launch a military assault on a Kurdish enclave in northern Syria "in the coming days," and urged the U.S. to support its efforts.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said the operation against the Afrin enclave aims to "purge terror" from his country's southern border.

Afrin is controlled by a Syrian Kurdish militia known as the YPG. Turkey considers the YPG to be a terrorist group linked to the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, that has waged a bloody insurgency within its borders.

A YPG spokesman in Afrin said clashes erupted after midnight between his unit and Turkish troops near the border with Turkey. Rojhat Roj said the shelling of areas in Afrin district, in Aleppo province, killed one YPG fighter and injured a couple of civilians on Sunday.

Turkey and its Western allies, including the U.S., consider the PKK a terrorist organization. But the U.S. has been arming some of Syria's Kurds to defeat Islamic State in Syria — a sore point in already tense U.S.-Turkish

relations.

The Turkish president said "despite it all" he wants to work with the U.S. in the region and hopes it will not side with the YPG during the upcoming Afrin operation.

"We expect (the U.S.) to support Turkey in its legitimate efforts" to combat terrorism, said Erdogan.

He added that the new operation would be an extension of Turkey's 2016 incursion into northern Syria, which aimed to combat ISIS and stem the advance of U.S.-backed Kurdish forces. Turkish troops are stationed in rebel-held territory on both sides of Afrin.

Roj said the Kurdish militia will fight to "defend our gains, our territories."

Senior Kurdish official Hediye Yusuf wrote on Twitter that the Turkish operation against Afrin is a "violation" of the Syrian people and undermines international efforts to reach a political solution in Syria.

The Turkey-PKK conflict has killed an estimated 40,000 people since 1984, and the resumption of hostilities in July 2015 killed more than 3,300 people, including state security forces, militants and civilians.

Taliban talks could pave way to Afghan peace deal

By CHAD GARLAND
AND ZUBAIR BABAKARKHAIL
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — An unofficial meeting between Taliban and Afghan government representatives in Turkey over the weekend could "pave the way" to a negotiated end to the country's 16-year war, an Afghan official said Sunday.

Mohammad Ismail Qasimyar, head of the international relations for Afghanistan's High Peace Council, confirmed that the meeting was being held in Istanbul, but he said the government participants don't have the authority to make any decisions as part of the talks.

"We still welcome such efforts," Qasimyar said. "We hope this will help and pave the way for a broader peace talks process, so the Afghan people's dream of peace comes true."

It's not the first time the parties have tried to broker a peace settlement, but previous attempts have not been fruitful.

Kabul's attempts to bring the Taliban into four-nation talks with the U.S., China and Pakistan fell apart in 2016 after the 2014 death of Taliban founder Mullah Mohammed Omar was revealed. The Taliban have since refused to negotiate.

This year, U.S. officials have said their goal is to drive the Taliban into negotiations through military and social pressure on the insurgents and diplomatic pressure on their supporters. An aggressive military campaign began late last year targeting the drug operations that finance the insurgency.

The U.S. has also increased pressure on Pakistan, who the U.S. had lobbied to use its influence to bring insurgents to the peace table, by announcing earlier this month it would halt military aid to Islamabad.

Neither the U.S. nor Pakistan appear to be part of the latest dialogue, which began over the weekend in Istanbul with the help of the Turkish government, local



RAHMAT GUL/AP

Afghan prisoners line up after their release Thursday from prison in Kabul, Afghanistan. The Afghan president pardoned 75 prisoners loyal to Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, a former warlord and U.S.-declared terrorist who signed a peace agreement with Kabul in 2016.

media reported.

An anonymous participant told Afghanistan's Pajhwok news agency the latest talks brought together representatives of the Afghan government, the Taliban, a splinter group loyal to Mullah Mohammed Rassouli and Hezb-i-Islami Afghanistan. The talks began Saturday and were slated to run through Monday, the source said.

The source said similar meetings were held in Turkey last year, but the media had not been informed of those discussions.

A source close to the Taliban told Pajhwok that the meeting was the third of its kind in Turkey but that the latest session was organized as a result of Hezb-i-Islami founder Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's visit to the country.

Qasimyar confirmed that the High Peace Council had sent an envoy and Hezb-i-Islami Afghanistan was also participating. He said the participants would soon release a statement about the meeting and who was involved.

Hekmatyar, a former warlord and U.S.-designated terrorist,

ended his armed group's 16-year insurgency against Kabul in 2016 and returned to the Afghan capital last year.

The Afghan government had wooed Hekmatyar into laying down arms with an agreement that gave him and his followers immunity for past wartime abuses and allowed them full political rights. Officials had hoped his example would draw the Taliban into peace talks, too.

The meeting with the Taliban comes just days after the Afghan president pardoned 75 prisoners who were loyal to Hekmatyar.

Navy Capt. Tom Gresback, a spokesman for NATO's Resolute Support mission in Kabul, said Sunday evening that officials were seeking more details about the latest talks, but that the international coalition "is in full support of the government of Afghanistan in all efforts to advance dialogue for peace and reconciliation."

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Islamic State offshoot claims Niger attack on US troops in '17

Associated Press

DAKAR, Senegal — An Islamic State offshoot is claiming it carried out the October attack in Niger that killed four U.S. soldiers and four Nigerian troops and sparked questions about U.S. military involvement in West Africa's vast Sahel region.

The Mauritanian Nouakchott News Agency reported Friday that Abu al-Walid al-Sahrawi with the self-professed ISIS affiliate claimed responsibility for the Oct. 4 ambush about 120 miles north of Niger's capital, Niamey.

The news agency has carried messages from the affiliate before, according to the

SITE Intelligence Group, which monitors jihadi websites.

U.S. Africa Command has been investigating the attack, which also wounded two U.S. troops and eight Nigerian troops. A final report is expected to be released this month.

A 12-member Army special forces unit was accompanying 30 Nigerian forces when they were attacked in a densely wooded area by as many as 50 militants traveling by vehicle and carrying small arms and rocket-propelled grenade launchers.

The Pentagon has declined to release details about the command team's exact mission. U.S. officials have said the joint

U.S.-Niger patrol had been asked to assist a second American commando team hunting for a senior ISIS member. The team had been asked to go to a location where the insurgent had last been seen.

After completing that mission, the troops stopped in a village to get food and water, then left. The U.S. military believes someone in the village may have tipped off the attackers.

The U.S. has approximately 800 troops in Niger, and U.S. special operations forces have been working with Niger's forces in a growing effort in recent years, helping them to improve their abilities to fight extremists.

Multiple military efforts exist against extremist groups, including Boko Haram and al-Qaida affiliates, that roam the vast Sahel, the sprawling, largely barren zone south of the Sahara desert. The growing fight includes France's largest overseas military operation, a United Nations peacekeeping mission in Mali and a five-nation regional force called the G5 Sahel that launched last year.

The Mauritanian news agency also reported that the extremists claimed responsibility for an attack Thursday on a French military convoy and for a series of attacks in Niger and border areas with Mali and Burkina Faso.

NATION

Police officers chase bus after threats reported

Associated Press

WADSWORTH, Ill. — Reports of a man armed with a gun and threatening to kill fellow passengers on a Greyhound bus led to a police chase of the vehicle that started in Wisconsin and ended in northern Illinois.

None of the 40 people aboard the bus bound for Chicago from Milwaukee on Friday night was injured, and the suspect was taken into custody after authorities used gas strips to flatten the tires of the bus, forced the vehicle to stop on Interstate 94 near the Illinois com-

munity of Wadsworth.

Racine County (Wis.) Sheriff Christopher Schmaling identified the suspect at a Saturday afternoon news conference. Schmaling said Margarito Vargas-Rosas, 33, of Chicago, was charged with making terroristic threats and disorderly conduct. He had previously been deported to Mexico and came back to the United States, where he lived in Chicago and worked at a restaurant in Milwaukee, Schmaling said at a news conference Saturday.

The suspect also threatened the arresting officers as well as the investigators at the po-

lice station, Schmaling said.

One passenger, Patrick Dodd, told the Chicago Tribune that the incident began when the man who said he had a gun started to threaten passengers riding in the back of the bus.

The sheriff stated Saturday that no gun was found on the suspect, but police plan to search the bus for a weapon.

Dodd and other passengers were left shaken by the ordeal and wondering why it took so long for the bus driver to stop after police began their chase. He said passengers in the back of him were yelling at the driver to pull

over.

Terrance Williams, of New Jersey, was in the middle of the bus and initially thought police were escorting the bus. But he too was confused about why it took so long for the driver to stop.

"The law is you see emergency lights you pull over," Williams said. "The police were in front of us, they were in back of us."

Schmaling said the bus driver told authorities that he didn't stop the bus because he thought the squad cars were following another vehicle.

Drones raise worries in capital

By MICHAEL LARIS

The Washington Post

Over a career that has taken him to Afghanistan and Iraq, Col. Patrick Duggan has seen the lethal power of drones. Now, as a base commander in the nation's capital, he is worried that frequent illegal flyings over Washington could pose a threat.

In the middle of a federal no-fly zone for drones, in some of the most sensitive and restricted airspace in the United States, technicians working with Duggan recorded nearly 100 drone sightings over two months last summer. And that was just around two Army posts he oversees.

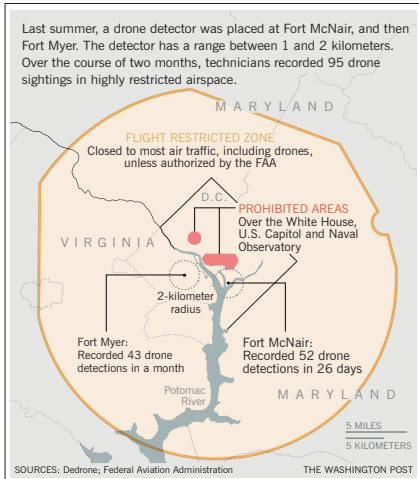
Many of the operators were probably oblivious to the flight ban or just ignoring it as they flew for fun, he said. But he's not sure. "Are they bad guys? Well, we don't know," Duggan said. "It's a technology that can be used to attack us at home. Why? Because we are not as prepared as we need to be."

Many drones can carry surveillance cameras, hacking devices or explosives, and they are easy to evade ground defenses, experts say.

Drones inhabit a curious space in U.S. law, making them particularly difficult to regulate. They have been deemed "aircraft," so they can simply be knocked out of the sky. Sometimes dubbed "flying laptops," they also are covered by laws against wiretapping and computer hacking. And most drones are categorized as "model aircraft," but Congress has said the Federal Aviation Administration generally can't issue regulations covering those.

In 2016, Congress granted the Defense Department power to trace, take control of or destroy drones within the United States, and the law limited that authority to three critical areas: protecting facilities involved with nuclear deterrence, space and missile defense.

Last year, the Trump administration sought broad counter-drone powers for federal agencies.



That request foundered on bipartisan concerns in Congress that it was too expansive.

Under the legislation Trump signed last month, the Defense Department's powers were expanded significantly. There are six new areas where it can track or take down drones, including working to protect the president, vice president or other officials immediately next in order of succession."

Air defenses, including in Washington, Special Operations forces activities and certain combat support, testing and explosives facilities were also included.

Duggan's effort to quantify the threat was unusual. Rather than relying on anecdotal information or random sightings, the commander of Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall wanted data.

Duggan worked with a San Francisco-based detection company, Dedrone, run by a former German drone maker, Joerg Lam-

precht, the company's chief executive, saw a business opportunity in late 2013 when a protester crashed a drone a few feet from Chancellor Angela Merkel.

The company's radio-frequency sensor on the roof of the National Defense University at Fort McNair, along Washington's riverfront, documented 52 drone sightings in 26 days. Technicians then moved the equipment across the Potomac to the fitness center

at Fort Myer, near Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia. They tallied another 43 sightings in a month. Some drones appeared multiple times.

The sensors generally pick up signals within a kilometer or two, sometimes farther, the company said.

The areas covered reach far beyond the posts themselves but represent just a fraction of the federal no-fly area for drones. Washington's Flight Restricted Zone stretches about 15 miles from Reagan National Airport and bans drone flights not specifically authorized by the FAA.

As a career Special Forces officer with experience tracking cyber and other "asymmetrical" attacks, Duggan has for years studied the mindset of adversaries seeking ways to inflict the greatest harm on the United States at the lowest cost. A drone attack is one of many, he said.

Duggan considered a Parrot Bebop drone that has been used in Syria and popped up repeatedly in the detection data. On Sept. 3, the aircraft was detected multiple times after 1 a.m. Then it returned for 21 minutes the next evening.

It probably wasn't probing his defenses or doing surveillance, he said. But a determined foe could do that—or worse, perhaps, with a "specific surgical strike or just to paralyze or cause fear."

Chelsea Manning files to run for Senate in Md.

Associated Press

NORTH BETHESDA, Md. — Chelsea Manning on Sunday confirmed via Twitter that she is a candidate for the U.S. Senate.

Three days after making her intention known to federal election officials, Manning tweeted "yup, we're running for senate" with an attached campaign video indicating her intention to run in the 2018 Maryland Democratic primary. She sent a subsequent tweet seeking donations to her campaign.

Manning, 30, filed her statement of candidacy with the Federal Election Commission on Thursday, listing an apartment in North Bethesda as her address.

She is running as a Democrat and will likely challenge two-term Sen. Ben Cardin in the primary. The state's senior senator is an overwhelming favorite to win.

Known as Bradley Manning at the time of her 2010 arrest, the former Army intelligence analyst was convicted of leaking more than 700,000 military and State Department documents to the anti-secrecy website WikiLeaks. She's been lauded as a traitor as well as a courageous hero.

Manning came out as transgender after being sentenced to 35 years in prison. President Barack Obama granted Manning clemency before leaving office last year.

The conservative media organization The Heritage Foundation first reported Manning's intention to run.

The Associated Press was unsuccessful in reaching Manning for comment. She told The Washington Post on Saturday that she might release more information in the coming days.

Cardin spokeswoman Sue Walinsky did not directly address Manning's candidacy or anyone else's. But she told The AP that "Cardin is looking forward to a vigorous debate of the issues and a robust conversation with Maryland voters."

Manning would not be the first transgender candidate to challenge a sitting member of Congress.

Kristin Beck, a retired Navy SEAL who is transgender, failed to unseat U.S. Rep. Steny Hoyer in Maryland's Democratic Primary in 2016. Beck got 12 percent of the vote.

"It was too much for me to run for Congress," Beck said in a phone interview Saturday. "I should have

run for something lower (state or local office). She might as well be running for president."

Beck said Manning is pulling a "publicity stunt."

"I totally, 100 percent disagree with everything she did," Beck said. "She's just grabbing headlines. I know what that feels like. I've been in the headlines. You get a sense that you're worthy and doing something that counts. And when you lose that, you try to do something to grab a headline."

Manning had said she wanted to expose what she considered to be the U.S. military's disregard of the effects of war on civilians, and she released information that she didn't believe would



Manning

harm the U.S.

Obama's decision to commute Manning's sentence to about seven years drew strong criticism from members of Congress and others, with Republican House Speaker Paul Ryan calling the move "just outrageous."

When Manning was released from Fort Leavenworth, Kan., in May, she told the AP in an email that she was eager to define her future — but made no mention of politics.

"I'm figuring things out right now — which is exciting, awkward, fun, and all new for me," Manning wrote.

The Oklahoma native had planned to move to Maryland, where she has an aunt. She has been registered to vote at the apartment in North Bethesda since mid-August, according to the Maryland State Board of Elections.

Her recent move would not affect a Senate bid. To run for that office, a person must be at least 30 years old, a U.S. citizen for nine years and an inhabitant of the state at election time, according to the Maryland State Board of Elections. A felony conviction does not appear to preclude a run.

Manning is yet to file for the primary with the state elections board, which she must do in person by Feb. 27.

NATION

Trump does more damage to himself than foes ever do

By DAN BALZ
The Washington Post

As the New Year heads to its third week, President Donald Trump remains on a personal, political losing streak. None of his opponents — not the Democrats, not the Never Trumpers, not any of the others — can damage him as badly as he hurts himself.

It was only a few days ago when he opened up an immigration negotiating session with bipartisan members of Congress to the cameras and was lauded in some quarters for doing so. He was described

in some accounts as a president doing the real business of the country. That proved to be a one-off moment.

Before and after, the conversation around the presidency — the conversation at times forced by the president — involved topics that were alternately disquieting and shocking, from questions about his mental fitness and stability to serve as president (which he helped to elevate with tweets) to the racist-and-vulgar comment he made about African and other nations in a private meeting.

Together they reinforce a portrait of a president who doesn't appear to understand or appreciate the importance of the immigrant experience, often lacks clarity of his own views or the details of issues he is negotiating, and who projects an image that regularly flies in the face of standards long applied to those who occupy the Oval Office.

Trump has tried to wiggle away from asking why the U.S. must take immigrants from what he called "shithole countries." Amid the firestorm set off by Post reporter Josh Dawsey's account of the meeting, Trump acknowledged he used some "tough" language during the meeting at the White House but said he never used the exact words attributed to him.

His claim was undercut quickly by others. Sen. Richard Durbin, D-Ill., one of the attendees, directly contradicted the president's statement, saying the president used words that were "hate-filled, vile and racist." Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., who has been courted by the president, issued a statement of his own that implicitly backed up Durbin. Graham said he had conveyed his feelings about what was said at the meeting directly to the president at the time. Graham notably did not side with Trump's version of events.

Two other senators at the meeting, Sens. Tom Cotton, R-Ark., and David Perdue, R-Ga., both of whom opposed the bipartisan deal Durbin and Graham had brought to the president for his consideration, claimed they could not recall the language "specifically," which is hardly an affirmation of the president's explanation.

Trump has been at this place before on the issue of race. In 2011, as he was toying with running for president, he trafficked in the false allegation that President Barack Obama was not born in the U.S., claiming at one point that he had sent private investigators to Hawaii to find the



ANDREW HANNA/AP

Supporters cheer Saturday as President Donald Trump's motorcade returns to Mar-a-Lago in Palm Beach, Fla., after Trump played golf at Trump International Golf Club.

evidence.

Obama punctured that canard by producing his long-form birth certificate. But the overt attempt to profit from the birther issue paid dividends politically for Trump and set him on a path that eventually put him into the Oval Office.

Through the course of the 2016 campaign, he attacked Mexican immigrants as rapists and criminals. He attacked a federal judge of Mexican heritage who was born in the U.S., a judge who happened to be overseeing a lawsuit against Trump University. He got into a fight with a Gold Star family, who happened to be Muslim and whose son was killed in the Iraq war, after they used the platform of the Democratic National Committee to criticize his campaign proposal for a ban on Muslim immigration.

As president, he twice offered kind words for the white supremacists who marched in Charlottesville, Va., saying that among them were some "very fine people." Later he called National Football League players who knelt during the national anthem, in protest of policing practices in some African-American communities, "sons of bitches" and said the owners should fire them.

Now he has used a horrible vulgarity to denigrate nations whose immigrants to the U.S. have made valuable contributions to the country. He compounded his dismissal of those countries by asking why the U.S. cannot take more immigrants from places like Norway, which happens to be predominantly white.

Condemnations came quickly from different parts of the political spectrum. A United Nations

human rights spokesman said there was no other word than "racist" to describe Trump's comment. The episode once again left the president politically isolated, save for those who either agree with him or are willing to set aside their discomfort, as many voters did when he was elected.

What the president said in the Oval Office on Thursday was only the most shocking of the comments that have marked the early days of 2018. He has continued his attacks on the First Amendment and freedom of the press. He has questioned the libel laws of the country, which protect the press in covering public figures, except in cases of recklessness and malice.

His response to events that go against him is to lash out by declaring that the processes of our democratic system are rigged or broken. His perspective on democratic governance is viewed almost entirely through the lens of whether he, personally, is winning or losing.

For some Trump advisers and for many Republican elected officials, there is not an almost automatic reaction to turn away when things like this occur, either to pretend what happened did not happen or to dismiss them as a president blowing off steam, like somebody ranting in a bar.

The consequences are far greater. As these kinds of comments pile one on top of another, they define the Trump presidency — and in the eyes of much of the world the current state of the U.S. and the Republican Party itself — as much as the policies he and party leaders are pursuing.

Vulgarity used by president is projected onto Trump Hotel in DC

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The explosive President Donald Trump used last week in a discussion about immigration in the Oval Office and other slogans were projected Saturday night onto an outer wall of the Trump Hotel in downtown Washington.

Video footage posted on Twitter shows the word "SHITHOLE" and poop emojis projected on the wall of the hotel. An arrow, also apparently projected on the building, points to the arched

doorway.

The pictures appear on the Twitter feed of Robin Bell, who previously has projected wording critical of the president onto the hotel.

He has become known as a kind of projectionist provocateur and something of a "hit-and-run editorial writer," as David Montgomery described him last year in The Washington Post.

The president, in a discussion last week on immigration policy, allegedly used "shithole" to refer to certain countries from which large-scale immigration was undesirable.

people who had never been granted DACA status.

The preliminary injunction temporarily blocking the halting of DACA was issued Tuesday by U.S. District Judge William Alsup in response to lawsuits by the state of California, the University of California and attorneys general from Maine, Maryland and Minnesota. In a Twitter post the day after the ruling, President Donald Trump said "it just shows how broken and unfair our court system is."

Critics said President Barack Obama abused executive power by creating DACA.

Last September, Trump ordered that the program end by March, and Congress has been working since then to come up with a legislative remedy to protect the DACA beneficiaries, who were brought illegally to the U.S. as children or entered the U.S. legally but overstayed visas.

About 700,000 people obtained protection from deportation through DACA. Advocates for immigrants estimate that each day, more than 120 DACA recipients have been losing their protected status because of Trump's order.

Feds resume taking applications to renew DACA status

By STEVE PADILLA
Los Angeles Times

Federal immigration authorities have resumed accepting requests for renewals in DACA, the Obama administration program that shielded hundreds of thousands of young immigrants from being deported.

The government's announcement came four days after a federal judge in San Francisco temporarily blocked the Trump administration's decision to phase out the program.

In a statement posted on its website, Citizenship and Immigration Services said, "Due to a federal court order, USCIS has resumed accepting requests to renew a grant of deferred action under DACA."

DACA stands for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. The program allowed some young immigrants in the country illegally to obtain two-year permits to stay legally to work and to attend school.

Saturday's announcement means that people who had been granted "deferred action" may request renewals. The government is now accepting requests from

NATION

Progress slow in cleanup of Calif. beach community

By MICHAEL BALSAMO
Associated Press

MONTECITO, Calif. — Recovery crews are slowly making progress digging away masses of mud, boulders and toppled trees in a California community that was ravaged by deadly mudslides, but officials said they've removed enough debris from creek canals to prevent another potential disaster when the next rainstorm hits.

Workers were using backhoes, jackhammers and chain saws to clear the debris in Montecito, nearly a week after a powerful storm sent flash floods cascading through mountain slopes that were burned bare by a huge wildfire in December. At least 19 people were killed, and five others remain missing.

In addition to trying to find those who are still missing after Tuesday morning's storm, crews have made it a top priority to clear out debris basins and creek canals before another rainstorm. Long-range forecasts gave the crews about a week before the next chance of rain — and potential new mudslides — although the precipitation was expected to be disorganized and light. Another system was possible two days

later.

"If we don't get those debris basins cleaned out, then we're not going to be prepared for the storm, and we don't know what that storm is going to look like," said Robert Lewin, Santa Barbara County's emergency management director.

The mudslides ravaged the tony community, destroying at least 65 homes and damaging more than 460 others, officials said. Firefighters went door to door along several blocks, checking the structural integrity of the damaged homes.

The rest of the community's infrastructure was also damaged. Some streets were cracked in half, and authorities closed bridges and overpasses because they were unstable.

"The bridges, the roads, they all need help," Lewin said.

Eight large excavators were being used to clear the debris from Montecito Creek, Tom Fayram, the deputy director of the county's flood control district, said.

"Two days ago I passed by an area where there was no creek, and today I went by, and the creek was fully restored," he said. "We are making great progress, and we have several days before that



PHOTOS BY MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/AP

Colette Layton, of the Atascadero Fire Department, searches a home on Saturday in Montecito, Calif. The home was destroyed by a deadly mudslide triggered by heavy rains.

‘The bridges, the roads, they all need help.’

Robert Lewin
Santa Barbara County emergency management director

next storm."

More than 2,000 searchers and recovery workers remained in the community late Saturday, carrying out backbreaking work in the summerlike weather that has made the stretch of Santa Barbara County coast about 90 miles northwest of Los Angeles a haven for the wealthy, celebrities and tourists.

Much of the community of



A crew on Friday works to clean up an area of Highway 101 that was filled with mud, water and debris in Montecito, Calif.

about 9,000 remained under mandatory evacuation orders, even unscathed areas, as crews both

removed debris and worked to restore water, sanitation, power and gas.

Mudslide brings economic shock to area built on tourism

By MICHAEL R. BLOOD
AND KRISTA FAURIA
Associated Press

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. — The California mudslide that killed at least 18 people is causing distress miles from where the torrent of muck and boulders stopped, as a local economy that thrives on tourism and the lure of sun-soaked beaches was left reeling.

On a postcard-perfect afternoon, the Santa Barbara Shellfish Co. would normally be bustling with lunchtime diners downing fried calamari and lobster tacos, especially on the cusp of a holiday weekend.

"We would be smashing right now," said manager Sean Johnson, referring to a typical Friday crowd at the restaurant on the edge of Santa Barbara Harbor.

But with the 101 Freeway clogged by mud and debris, cutting off traffic from Southern California, "There is hardly any body in here," Johnson lamented.

"The big hit," he said, "is people can't get up here from L.A."

As searchers continued to look for bodies in the thick mud and evacuations remained in effect, the economic damage ranged up and down the coast, far from where the mudslide ravaged the celebrity getaway of Montecito.

In affluent Summerland, just east of where the mud flow cut a swath through



MARCIO JOSE SANCHEZ/AP

A mud-covered sign over the closed Highway 101 is seen at an overpass Saturday in Montecito, Calif.

homes and businesses alike, a liquor store with its door open was a lonely outpost. Restaurants and hotels were dark in Montecito, where 65 homes were destroyed, hundreds more were damaged and power and water were shut off.

The historic San Ysidro Ranch, where President John F. Kennedy and Jackie Kennedy honeymooned, was heavily damaged.

Santa Barbara is a tourist magnet, at-

tracting visitors to its famous beaches and trendy restaurants. But on Friday there were plenty of seats at eateries, pedestrian traffic was unusually light and parking spaces were often empty.

Mark Schniepp, director of the California Economic Forecast, said the area is being shaken by a three-pronged problem: Tourists aren't coming in their usual numbers, residents have been forced to move out, and thousands of workers can't get to their jobs.

He said some 12,000 daily commuters drive into Santa Barbara from the south, a route now blocked. Those people aren't buying lunch or coffee or filling up the gas tank on the way to work.

Residents are uprooted, the dollars they would pump into the economy gone with them. January is not high tourism season in Santa Barbara, but now-closed seaside hotels typically lure crowds throughout the year.

Making matters worse, the area recently witnessed a monster wildfire that torched homes and sent clouds of ash and smoke into communities. Meanwhile, beaches were closed to swimming after health officials said mud and runoff from heavy rains contained unknown amounts of sewage and contaminants.

"The stigma that we have right now, it's flooded, it's burned, there is mud everywhere. That is not going to be helpful with

tourists," Schniepp said.

The economy will eventually recover, starting when the freeway reopens, possibly as early as Monday.

"Once the freeway opens up, fingers crossed, we are counting on bouncing back," said Johnson, the restaurant manager, who has had to cut back on workers in the meantime while dealing with delayed produce deliveries.

But it's not known when many residents in Montecito can return, and widespread damage is likely to take months or longer to repair.

Ken Oplinger, who heads the Santa Barbara Region Chamber of Commerce, said the combination of the wildfire and the mudslide could doom some smaller businesses.

The threat, when tourists stay away: "You just don't have the cash flow to continue," he said.

Patrick Casey, owner of the State & Fig restaurant in downtown Santa Barbara, said he's worried but expressed confidence that his business, and the community, will snap back.

During the fires, the restaurant lost holiday parties and customers, but they made adjustments. If needed, they will again, he said.

"This whole experience has been humbling," Casey added. "We're really hoping once the dust settles there will be new life here."

NATION



AP photos

The tomb of Martin Luther King Jr. and his wife, Coretta Scott King, is seen as the sun sets in Atlanta. The site is among about 130 in 14 states being promoted as part of the new U.S. Civil Rights Trail, which organizers hope will boost tourism in the region.

14 states join to promote civil rights tourism

By JAY REEVES
Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM, Ala.—Southern states that once fought to maintain racial segregation are now banding together to promote civil rights tourism at sites including the building where the Confederacy was born and the motel where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. died.

Fourteen states stretching from Kansas to Delaware, including all of the Deep South, are joining to promote the U.S. Civil Rights Trail, which will highlight about 130 sites linked to the modern civil rights movement. The joint effort is being unveiled as part of the MLK holiday weekend.

Individual Southern states have used such promotions for years, beginning with a black history trail launched by Alabama in the 1980s, but never before have they joined together in a single push to bolster civil rights tourism, said Lee Sentell, a leader of the effort.

"Everyone wants to showcase their landmarks. For the U.S. Civil Rights Trail, we're saying 'What happened here changed the world,'" said Sentell, Alabama's tourism director.

Most states participating in the promotion are part of Atlanta-based Travel South USA, which is funded by state tourism agencies to lure visitors to the region. The organization has launched civilrightstrail.com and is placing advertisements in national magazines to promote the trail.

Landmarks on the trail include churches, courthouses, schools, businesses and other sites that played a role in the civil rights movement in the 1950s and '60s, plus memorials and museums that document the period.

Some of the sites on the list are

familiar, like Alabama's Capitol.

Delegates met in the white-domed building to form the Confederate States of America in 1861, and King spoke outside the building at the end of the Selma-to-Montgomery voting rights march in 1965. The trail also features the National Civil Rights Museum, located at the Lorraine Motel where King was assassinated in 1968 in Memphis, Tenn., and the MLK National Historic Site in Atlanta.

Other locations are less well-known, like schools in Topeka, Kan., that were part of the Brown vs. Board of Education case that resulted in the U.S. Supreme Court decision outlawing segregated schools in 1954, or Howard High School of Technology, part of another desegregation case in Wilmington, Del.

The trail includes locations in Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia. It also features the District of Columbia, with attractions including the Lincoln Memorial, the National Museum of African American History and Culture and the U.S. Supreme Court building.

The trail is the product of a suggestion made two years ago by then-National Park Service Director Jonathan Jarvis, who wanted historians to document surviving civil rights landmarks, Sentell said. Researchers at Georgia State University located 60 sites, and states added about 70 more.

Alabama, which was the site of racial violence and multiple civil rights protests in the early 1960s, has the most locations featured



People wait in line to enter the National Civil Rights Museum on Martin Luther King Jr. Day in Memphis, Tenn., last year. The site also is on the trail.

on the trail, at 29. That doesn't include a new memorial to lynching victims scheduled to open later this year in Montgomery.

Sentell said the main goal of the trail is "to get tourists to cross state lines and to learn about things that happened in various cities."

It's unclear exactly how many tourists visit sites related to the civil rights movement each year, but as many as 1.2 million people paid for admission at locations that charged admission last year in 12 Southern states, Sentell said.



The F.W. Woolworth's lunch counter is seen at the International Civil Rights Center & Museum in Greensboro, N.C., another trail destination.

NATION

Debate simmers over police selling seized guns

By MARTHA BELLISLE
Associated Press

SEATTLE — Kyle Juhl made one last attempt to patch things up with his fiancée, then took back his ring, put a gun to his head and pulled the trigger as she and her mother ran from the apartment. The bullet went through a wall and narrowly missed a neighbor's head as she bent to pick up her little boy.

The Smith & Wesson 9 mm that Juhl used to kill himself in Yakima in 2014 was familiar to law enforcement. The Washington State Patrol had seized it years earlier while investigating a crime and then arranged its sale back to the public. It eventually fell into Juhl's hands, illegally.

It's fears of tragedies like that, or worse, that have created a split among law enforcement officials over the reselling of confiscated guns by police departments, a longtime practice allowed in most states.

Juhl's gun was among nearly 6,000 firearms that were used in crimes and then sold by Washington law enforcement agencies since 2010, an Associated Press review found. More than a dozen of those weapons later turned up in new crime investigations inside the state, according to a yearlong AP analysis that used hundreds of public records to match up serial numbers.

The guns were used to threaten people, seized at gang hangouts, discovered in drug houses, possessed illegally by convicted felons, hidden in a stolen car and taken from a man who was committed because of erratic behavior.

While those dozen or so guns represent only a minuscule small percentage of the old firearms, some police departments contend the law shouldn't be doing anything to put weapons back on the street. The AP did not look at how many of the resold guns figured in crimes committed out of state, so the actual number of misuses could be much higher.

"We didn't want to be the agency that sold the gun to somebody who uses it in another crime," said Capt. Jeff Schneider, of the Yakima Police Department, which sold guns until about a decade ago but now melts them down. "While there is almost an unlimited supply of firearms out there, we don't need to make the problem worse."

Similarly, the International Association of Chiefs of Police says confiscated guns should be destroyed because putting them back in circulation "increases the availability of firearms which could be used again to kill or injure additional police officers and citizens." Also, federal agencies must destroy seized firearms unless they are needed as evidence or being used by the agency.

On the other side of the debate, some law enforcement officials say the selling of guns raises money to purchase crime-fighting equipment and if the police departments were abandoned people would just buy weapons somewhere else. In fact, a growing number of states from Arizona to North Carolina are passing laws prohibiting agencies from destroying guns.

"These guns are going to be out there," said Sheriff Will Hartsch, of Fremont County, Wash. "If I destroy them all, I'm just helping Remington or Winchester's bottom line."

Phyllis Holcomb, a manager with the Kentucky State Police, which oversees Kentucky's gun sale program, said such transfers have helped equip officers with body armor and other gear.

The debate is playing out in Washington state, where the state patrol is pushing back against a state law that requires the agency to auction off or trade most guns.

The state patrol hasn't sold any weapons since 2014 and at one point accumulated more than 400 in the hope the Legislature



PHOTOS BY ELAINE THOMPSON/AP

Above: Andy Muscato looks over a rifle at Johnny's Auction House, which handles gun sales for a half-dozen police departments and the Lewis County Sheriff's Office, in Rochester, Wash. Left: A Johnny's customer takes a close look at a pistol.

A look at some guns that ended up at crime scenes

By MARTHA BELLISLE
Associated Press

SEATTLE — A yearlong Associated Press analysis found more than a dozen firearms sold by law enforcement agencies in Washington state since 2010 later became evidence in new criminal investigations.

Identifying guns sold by law enforcement and matching them to new crimes required extensive research and dozens of public records requests to individual agencies.

Using those records, the AP created a database of almost 6,000 firearms sold by law enforcement since 2010. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives declined to release tracking information on guns associated with crimes, so the AP collected that information from individual agencies and compared it with its own database to find firearms with matching make, model, caliber and serial numbers.

Below are details about some of the guns sold by Washington state law enforcement that were later picked up at crime scenes:

■ **Baby shot in car seat.** The Washington State Patrol traded a batch of crime guns with a firearms dealer in June 2010. The batch included a Lorcin L380 semiautomatic pistol. In April 2015, a gang member shot at a car carrying a couple and their year-old daughter. One of the bullets hit the child in the head and killed her. While searching a home frequented by the suspected shooter and many other gang members, the Kent Police Department found a Lorcin L380 semiautomatic pistol — the gun sold by the state patrol.

■ **Text threats.** The Pierce County Sheriff's Office in April 2014 sold a list of guns at auction that included a Moss-

berg 12-gauge shotgun. In October 2016, Jaylen Bolar sent text messages to his mother, threatening to kill her and others. Angela Almo contacted a behavioral health center instead of the police because she knew her son had firearms, including a Mossberg 12-gauge shotgun, and she feared he'd be killed in a standoff with authorities.

When the Tacoma police became involved, he denied it, but his aunt confirmed that she, too, had received threats. Robin Olson showed an officer her phone, which contained a message from Bolar asking his uncle to kill him because he was tired of living.

Bolar also threatened to kill a woman who used to be his boss. He was taken into custody, and a search of his home revealed two firearms in his bedroom. One was the Mossberg shotgun sold by the sheriff's office.

■ **Juveniles in stolen car.** The Aberdeen Police Department sold a Lorcin Model L380 pistol in February 2011. In May 2016, the Kent Police Department located a stolen vehicle parked at the Benson Village Apartments and found a gun under the seat — the Lorcin Model L380 pistol sold by Aberdeen police. The three juveniles who stole the car were convicted felons.

■ **Drunken felon.** The Kitsap County Sheriff's Office sold a Hi Point 9 mm pistol in March 2014. In October 2015, the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office responded to a 911 call from a woman who said she'd heard what she thought was a gunshot and went outside to find her daughter's intoxicated boyfriend passed out on the front porch. When deputies arrived, they found a handgun, the Hi Point 9 mm pistol, on the ground next to the man. It was the gun sold by the Kitsap sheriff's office.

A search found that the man was a convicted felon who wasn't permitted to have a gun. The deputy put the man in handcuffs and called for medical help.

■ **Prohibited from having a gun.** The Washington State Patrol traded a Lorcin L380 semiautomatic pistol with a firearms dealer in June 2010. In May 2015, the Kent Police Department was investigating a 911 call and encountered four people outside the house. One of the men was prohibited from having a gun, but they found he was carrying a handgun, the Lorcin L380 semiautomatic pistol sold by the state patrol. The gun had been reported stolen, and he was arrested.

■ **Drug house assault.** The Aberdeen Police Department traded a JC Higgins 22-caliber rifle with a firearms dealer in February 2011. In April 2015, the Yakima Police Department responded to a domestic violence assault involving a JC Higgins 22-caliber rifle with the same serial number. The dispute involved an elderly man who had handled his wife roughly and threatened her sister. The man was charged, and police took his firearm. In October 2015, Kent police searched a suspected drug house and arrested several people wanted on felony warrants. They found a 22-caliber rifle — the JC Higgins rifle sold by the Aberdeen police.

■ **Facebook posts about killing.** The Thurston County Narcotics Task Force sold a Smith & Wesson pistol in August 2012. In October 2013, the Tacoma police went to the University of Washington, Tacoma, to investigate a report of a student who was posting photos of a gun on Facebook and said he had "wild, colorful dreams of shooting and killing lots of people last night." Police found in his backpack a Smith and Wesson pistol, the one sold by the narcotics task force.

would change the law and let the agency destroy them. Democratic Rep. Tana Senn, of Bellevue, is sponsoring such a bill.

"I know many of the police chiefs in my district chose not to sell but rather to destroy, and in their own words, 'It's so we can sleep at night,'" Senn told a legislative committee.

The National Rifle Association opposes the plan. "The police chiefs maybe could

sleep better if they went out and apprehended the criminals behind the guns and didn't worry about destroying perfectly legal firearms that are no more easy to purchase than a brand-new firearm at a firearms dealer," NRA spokesman Tom Kwieciak said.

Tragedies involving police sold guns have happened throughout the U.S.

In 2010, a mentally ill man ambushed and wounded two Pentagon police officers with

a handgun sold by Memphis, Tenn., police. Also that year, a Las Vegas court security officer was killed by a man with a shotgun sold by a Memphis-area sheriff's office. And in 2015, an unstable man walked into City Hall in New Hope, Minn., and wounded two officers with a shotgun sold by the Duluth Police Department. The department has since stopped selling guns and now destroys them.

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WORLD

Francis: It is a sin to let fear make us hostile to migrants

By FRANCES D'EMILIO
Associated Press

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis has defined hostility and rejection of refugees and migrants as sin, encouraging people to overcome their “fully comprehensible” fears that these new arrivals might “disturb the established order” of local communities.

At his invitation, several thousand migrants, refugees and immigrants from 49 countries joined Francis at Mass in St. Peter's Basilica on Sunday, a day the Catholic Church dedicated to the issues and contributions of those who leave homelands in hope of a better life.

New arrivals must “know and respect the laws, the culture and the traditions of the countries that take them in,” he said. Local communities must “open themselves without prejudices to their rich diversity, to understand the hopes and potential of the newly arrived, as well as their fears and vulnerabilities.”

“It is not easy to enter into another culture, to put oneself in the shoes of people so different from us, to understand their thoughts

and their experiences,” Francis said.

“As a result, we often refuse to encounter the other and raise barriers to defend ourselves. Local communities are sometimes afraid that the newly arrived will disturb the established order, will ‘steal’ something they have long labored to build up.”

Similarly, he said, newcomers also are afraid: “of confrontation, judgment, discrimination, failure.”

“These fears are legitimate, based on doubts that are fully comprehensible from a human point of view,” Francis continued in his homily.

“Having doubts and fears is not a sin,” the pope said. “The sin is to allow these fears to determine our responses, to limit our choices, to compromise respect and generosity, to feed hostility and rejection.”

Francis elaborated: “The sin is to refuse to encounter the other, the different, the neighbor,” instead of seeing it as a “privileged opportunity” to encounter God.

In his almost 5-year-old papacy, Francis has stressed the Catholic church's mission to welcome vulnerable and marginalized people.



ALESSANDRA TARANTINO/AP

A family speaks to Pope Francis on the occasion of a Mass on the world day for migrants and refugees at St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on Sunday.

His focus comes as wealthier countries, including several European Union nations and the U.S., are intent on increasing physical or legal barriers to migrants.

Later, greeting about 25,000

people in St. Peter's Square, Francis advocated responding to the migrations that “today are a sign of our times” in four ways: “welcome, protect, promote and integrate” migrants.

Peru rocked by quake; at least 1 person killed

Associated Press

LIMA, Peru — A powerful earthquake struck off Peru's coast early Sunday, destroying adobe structures and killing at least one person, according to officials.

The U.S. Geological Survey reported that the 4.18 a.m. temblor had a magnitude of 7.1, down from an earlier calculation of 7.3. The epicenter was 25 miles southwest of the small town of Acari in the Arequipa district. It was centered 22 miles below the surface.

Arequipa Gov. Yamila Orosio tweeted that at least one person was killed and that there were reports of power outages and collapsed adobe structures.

The U.S. Pacific Tsunami Warning Center initially warned that “hazardous tsunami waves are forecast for some coasts” and that larger-than-normal waves could hit Peru and Chile.

But the center then said in a later statement that “there is no longer a tsunami threat from this earthquake” and that the center hadn't observed any tsunami waves.



DHA-DEPO PHOTOS/AP

A Boeing 737-800 with Turkey's Pegasus Airlines skids off the runway downhill toward the sea at the airport in Trabzon, Turkey, on Sunday.

Plane dangles off cliff after skid in Turkey

By ZEYNEP BILGINISY
Associated Press

ISTANBUL — A commercial plane that skidded off a runway after landing in northern Turkey dangled precariously off a muddy cliff with its nose only a few feet from the sea.

Some of the 168 people on board the Boeing 737-800 described it as a “miracle” that everyone was evacuated safely.

Images show the aircraft on its belly and at an acute angle just above the water. If it had slid any farther along the slope, the plane would have likely plunged into the

Black Sea in the Turkish province of Trabzon.

The incident late Saturday created panic among the 162 passengers on board Pegasus Airlines Flight PC8622, which originated in the capital, Ankara. The six-member crew, including two pilots, also was evacuated, and Pegasus said there were no injuries. Flights were suspended at Trabzon Airport for several hours after the incident before resuming again Sunday.

Passenger Yuksel Gordu told Turkey's official Anadolu news agency that words weren't enough to describe their fear. “It's a mir-

acle we escaped. We could have burned, exploded, flown into the sea,” Gordu said. “Thank God for this. I feel like I'm going crazy when I think about it.”

Another passenger, Fatma Gordu, told the private Dogan news agency that there was a loud sound after landing.

“We swerved all of a sudden,” she said. “The front of the plane crashed, and the back was in the air. Everyone panicked.”

Trabzon Gov. Yucel Yavuz said investigators were trying to determine why the plane had left the runway. The prosecutor's office launched an investigation.

Iranian says ‘no hope’ of survivors in tanker crash

By AMIR VAHDAT
Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — A burning Iranian tanker listing for days off the coast of China after a collision with another vessel sank Sunday, with an Iranian official saying there was “no hope” of survival for the 29 missing sailors onboard.

Iranian state television reported that the Sanchi had sunk Sunday, days after its collision in the East China Sea. An anchorwoman on state television offered condolences on behalf of the nation for the loss.

State TV quoted Mahmoud Rastad, the chief of Iran's maritime agency, as saying, “There is no hope of finding survivors among the (missing) 29 members of the crew.”

President Hassan Rouhani expressed his condolences and called on relevant government agencies to investigate the tragedy and take any necessary legal measures, according to state TV. Officials could not be immediately reached for comment Sunday night, though the state-run broadcaster CGTN reported that the Sanchi had sunk. CGTN also said the ship's voice data recorder, which functions like “black boxes” on aircraft, had been recovered for comment Sunday night, though the state-run broadcaster CGTN reported that the Sanchi had sunk. CGTN also said the ship's voice data recorder, which functions like “black boxes” on aircraft, had been recovered for comment Sunday night, though the state-run broadcaster CGTN reported that the Sanchi had sunk.

The cause of the collision 160 miles off the coast of Shanghai, remains unclear. Three bodies have been recovered from the sea, leaving 29 crewmembers still unaccounted for. The crew was all Iranian except for two Bangladeshis.

The Chinese freighter CF Crystal, which collided with the Panamanian-registered tanker, had 21 crewmembers, all of whom were reported safe.

Television footage Saturday showed parts of the Sanchi still aflame, its hull and superstructure completely stripped of paint.

Thirteen ships, including one from South Korea and two from Japan, were engaged in the rescue and cleanup effort Saturday, spraying foam in an effort to extinguish the fire. The tanker was carrying a cargo of nearly 1 million barrels of condensate, a type of gassy, ultralight oil that readily evaporates or burns off in a fire, reducing the chance of a major oil spill.

Intense flames, bad weather and poor visibility all hampered rescue efforts.

The tanker has operated under five different names since it was built in 2008, according to the U.N.-run International Maritime Organization. The National Iranian Tanker Co. describes itself as operating the largest tanker fleet in the world.

It's the second collision for a ship from National Iranian Tanker in less than a year and a half. In August 2016, one of its tankers collided with a Swiss container ship in the Singapore Strait, damaging the both ships but causing no injuries or oil spill.

WORLD

Spanish club ceiling collapse injures 26

MADRID — Spanish authorities said 26 people were injured when a ceiling collapsed at a Madrid nightclub.

Emergency services for the Spanish capital said 11 of the injured revelers were taken to nearby hospitals to be treated for "bruises and light wounds." The others were treated on site.

Emergency services said that a section of the ceiling measuring about 170 square feet fell onto the people at the nightclub in southern Madrid on Sunday.

UK party suspends leader's girlfriend

LONDON — The U.K. Independence Party has suspended the girlfriend of the party's leader after she reportedly made racist remarks about Prince Harry's fiancée, Meghan Markle.

In a statement, Jo Marney apologized for the "shocking language" she used in a series of text messages to a friend, but said they had been "taken out of context."

The Mail on Sunday newspaper reported that Marney, 25, made offensive comments about Markle and black people, including calling them "ugly."

Party leader Henry Bolton said Marney's membership in the party was suspended immediately.

Liberian party expels leader over VP flap

MONROVIA, Liberia — Liberia's outgoing governing party says it has voted to expel President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf because of her alleged decision not to support her vice president in the latest presidential poll.

Unity Party's assistant secretary-general for press and public affairs, Mohammed Ali, said Sirleaf was expelled for violating the party's constitution. He said Sirleaf is accused of sending people to campaign against the party.

Vice President Joseph Boakai, who served as Sirleaf's deputy for 12 years, lost the Dec. 26 run-off elections to former international soccer star George Weah.

Ali added that the president also was seen campaigning with Weah.

Iraqi PM vows to lead diverse coalition in vote

BAGHDAD — Iraq's prime minister says he will lead a "cross-sectarian" list in national elections proposed for May, hoping to build off last year's victory against Islamic State.

Haider al-Abadi, who comes from Iraq's Shiite majority, assumed office in 2014, weeks after ISIS stormed across northern and eastern Iraq. Since then, Iraqi forces backed by a U.S.-led coalition gradually have retaken all the territory once held by the Sunni extremists.

In a statement late Saturday, al-Abadi said his Victory Alliance will "boost the country's integrity and national sovereignty, correct mistakes and achieve justice and equality for all Iraqis."

From The Associated Press

Tunisia marks 7 years since revolution

By BOUAZZA BEN BOUAZZA

Associated Press

TUNIS, Tunisia — Tunisia, shaken by days of nationwide unrest over price increases, is marking seven years on Sunday since the North African nation drove out its longtime autocratic ruler.

Tunisians are calling for peaceful protests on the anniversary to tell the country's new leaders that they have failed to fix problems that stirred the revolution.

President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali fled into exile Jan. 14, 2011, transforming the country into a budding democracy that inspired the Arab Spring — then defied it by being the only country to keep its transition peaceful.

Now, protesters are driving home the message that they believe that six governments in power since then have crushed hopes of social and economic justice and left them feeling betrayed.

Frustration was in full view last week when small demonstra-

tions erupted around the country before ballooning and degenerating into theft, pillaging and car-burning in some places as momentum grew.

A police crackdown stemmed the protests by week's end. But it was unclear whether the call by organizations and some politicians for peaceful demonstrations would fan passions.

One person died in unrest outside the capital, Tunis, and scores were injured, including 97 security officers in five days of unrest that began a week ago. Interior Ministry spokesman Khelifa Chibani said Friday. Dozens of police cars were damaged, two police stations were burned and eight others were ransacked. Arrests were put at nearly 780, including 16 religious extremists, for vandalism and looting.

"I've been out of work for seven years and see nothing ahead, no flicker of hope for a better future," said Ali Ben Mahmoud, a university graduate from Tunis

who took part in the initial demonstration last week organized by the group Fesf Nestanau (What Are We Waiting For).

Fatma Ben Hassine, a nearly empty shopping basket in hand, echoed that complaint.

"The revolution brought nothing concrete to our daily lives, which only get worse and worse," she said. "The politicians, whose only concern is their comfort, leave us in despair."

The revolution was sparked by the death of a fruit and vegetable seller in the central town of Sidi Bouzid who set himself afire Dec. 10, 2010, in apparent anger and despair over mistreatment by police who upset his cart. That region and others outside the capital have a history of neglect by central authorities — and were the focus of promises for economic and social justice by leaders of Tunisia's new era, along with guarantees of freedom of expression stifled under Ben Ali.

The democratic transition

gave Tunisia a new constitution, opened the way to free elections and reinforced equality among sexes — all while Tunisia battled deadly extremist attacks, including on tourists at the famed Bardo Museum and at a resort hotel outside the seaside town of Sousse.

A four-way group, known as the Quartet and charged with dialogue to avert change from derailing, was awarded the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize "for its decisive contribution to the building of a pluralistic democracy in Tunisia," the Norwegian Nobel Committee stated.

But some essential motives behind the revolution were being ignored, experts say.

The jobless rate is above 15 percent, according to official figures, and above 25 percent in some regions, with vast areas of the interior still marginalized.

The flashing lights of economic and social indicators were all red, "even bright red," economist Azzeddine Saidane said.



MANISH SWARUP/AP

Rohingya boys wash potatoes Saturday in a polluted puddle at Nayapara refugee camp in Bangladesh.

Suu Kyi calls investigation of mass grave in Rohingya a positive step

Associated Press

BANGKOK — Myanmar's civilian leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, has called the military's investigation into the deaths of Rohingya Muslims found in a mass grave a "positive indication," state media reported Saturday.

The military, which has been accused of indiscriminate killings, rapes and the burning of Rohingya villages, acknowledged that security forces and villagers were responsible for the deaths of 10 people found in a mass grave in December. It said the 10 were "Bengali terrorists" who had threatened villagers, but that the military would "take action" against those who "broke the rules of engagement."

The government of Buddhist-majority Myanmar does not acknowledge Rohingya as a minority group even though they have lived in the country for generations. It says they're immigrants from neighboring Bangladesh.

Since August, military operations have driven more than 650,000 Rohingya into refugee camps across the border in Bangladesh.

"It is a positive indication that we are taking the steps to be responsible," Suu Kyi said, according to a report in the Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper. "However, some may worry. But I believe that our investigation will prevent such things from happening again."

Suu Kyi made the comments Friday during a joint news conference with Japan's foreign minister. Suu Kyi is Myanmar's foreign minister as well as the government's civilian leader, though the military has a final say in security matters.

Neither the military nor Suu Kyi has said what action will be taken against those responsible for the deaths linked to the mass grave in Rakhine state, where most of the Rohingya live.

S. African party leader targets 'billions' in graft

By KRISTA MAHR
Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG — The new leader of South Africa's ruling party vowed Saturday to crack down on the corruption that has weakened the African National Congress in a new push to end inequities that haunt the nation more than 20 years after the end of white minority rule.

"Billions of rands have been illegally diverted to individuals," Cyril Ramaphosa said in a speech to celebrate the party's 106th anniversary.

It was Ramaphosa's first major public address since he was elected to lead Africa's oldest liberation party in December, replacing scandal-prone President Jacob Zuma as party leader. He likely will be elected the next president in 2019.

Public frustration over corruption allegations against Zuma deeply split the ANC in recent months, and Ramaphosa has been pressured by opposition parties and some ANC members to recall Zuma as president. Zuma was booted upon his arrival at Saturday's event.

Ramaphosa instead is emphasizing the need to unify the party.

The ANC "has become deeply divided through factionalism, patronage, corruption and competition for resources," he said. "At the center of our efforts this year is unity."

On the eve of a high-level ruling-party meeting this week that had threatened to discuss his fate, Zuma acknowledged the pressure, announcing Tuesday he was appointing a commission of inquiry to look into the corruption allegations. "This matter cannot wait any longer," he said.

Ramaphosa on Saturday thanked Zuma for that decision.

"Corruption in state-owned enterprises and other public institutions has undermined our government's programs to address poverty and unemployment," Ramaphosa, also the country's deputy president, said. "We are going to confront corruption and state capture in all its forms."

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Car kills escaped cow; bull chases onlookers

NY YAPHANK — Authorities and witnesses said a cow that escaped a farm was fatally hit by a vehicle Friday night in a rural section of eastern Long Island.

For a short time, a companion bull chased away onlookers before being corralled by authorities.

Newsday reported the accident happened Friday night in Yaphank, about 65 miles east of New York City.

Leslie Clay, who lives near where the accident happened, said she saw a bull chasing the occupants of the car that struck the cow. She let the fleeing man and his daughter into her home to call 911.

Clay said the bull also chased a responding police officer.

Police: Nude man forces way into home

AL PRATTVILLE — Authorities said a nude man forced his way into an Alabama home and tried to sexually assault a woman.

Prattville Police Chief Mark Thompson told The Montgomery Advertiser that Eric Lamont Barnes, 47, was charged with attempted sexual assault and burglary Jan. 8.

Thompson said residents of the home told police that Barnes tried to sexually assault an elderly woman living there. Authorities said Barnes fled after a physical encounter with the victim and witnesses inside the home.

Man using space heater in truck dies in fire

OK TULSA — A homeless man died after a space heater was running inside a truck to keep it warm caused a fire.

Tulsa firefighters said the blaze erupted early Saturday morning at an auto repair shop.

Authorities said the unidentified man was sleeping inside the vehicle while using the heater to keep the truck warm. The heater was attached to an extension cord that ran to another building.

The fire broke out about 2:30 a.m. and spread to another vehicle.

Firefighters said the owner of the lot told them he was letting the homeless man sleep on the property.

Deputies rescue dog belonging to colleague

FL FORT LAUDERDALE — When three Florida deputies spotted a dog about to drown, they had no idea they were about to save one of their own.

While trying to rescue the Broward Sheriff's Office responded to a call about a German shepherd in distress in a canal near Fort Lauderdale on Jan. 8.

The deputies tried to coax the dog out of the water but were unsuccessful. Eventually, Deputy Josh Stanbaugh jumped in the water and pulled out the dog. While trying to locate the dog's

THE CENSUS

\$30K

The total value of five French bulldog puppies stolen from a pet store in Arizona. Tempe police said the puppies were taken from the Animal Kingdom pet store Wednesday night. The store is offering a \$1,000 reward for their safe return. Detective Liliana Duran said surveillance footage shows two men placing the puppies into a large trash can and leaving in what appeared to be a gray van.



ROBERT F. BUKATY/AP

A soggy slog

A pedestrian splashes through a puddle of snowmelt as temperatures climbed above freezing in Portland, Maine, last week following a long stretch of sub-zero weather.

owner, they learned that it belongs to a fellow deputy who works at the airport. The dog, Shasta, is now safely home and in good health.

Baltimore again tops Orkin list for bed bugs

MD BALTIMORE — The pest control company Orkin has named Baltimore the No. 1 city for bed bugs for the second year in a row, The Baltimore Sun reported.

Orkin released its "Top 50 Bed Bug Cities" list Jan. 8. Washington came in second, followed by Chicago, Los Angeles and Columbus, Ohio.

The company based its rankings on where it performed the most bed bug treatments from December 2016 to November 2017 in residential and commercial locations.

Thieves steal blanket, return empty package

ID COEUR D'ALENE — Thieves stole a package from the front door of a northern Idaho home containing a blanket knitted by a woman for her

granddaughter, and later they returned the empty package, the family said.

The package containing the handmade blanket was delivered to the Coeur d'Alene home Saturday while the Clements family was away, the Coeur d'Alene Press reported.

When the family returned home, the package was gone, Nate Clements said. He said his mother made the blanket for his daughter, Josslyn, 7.

Later that day, the family left the home again. Clements said when they returned, the open package decorated with hand-drawn hearts was waiting for them but the blanket was missing.

Police: Woman topless in attempt to rob driver

LA HARAHAN — A Louisiana couple is accused of attempting to rob an Uber driver that the woman distracted by being topless.

Harahan Police Chief Tim Walker told news outlets Anthony Kennedy, 24, and Rayna Fillios, 22, were arrested Saturday.

The victim told officers he gave his telephone number to Fillios when she hailed a ride. Fillios

called and asked him to come over.

He said Fillios was topless when she opened the front door. Authorities said Fillios grabbed his arms, pulled him into her chest, kissed him and bit his tongue to distract him.

When Fillios let go, police said, Kennedy brandished a knife and told the victim to hand over his money. The victim refused and Kennedy punched him.

The couple were charged with several offenses including armed robbery.

Police say woman arrested in \$100 theft

RI WARWICK — Rhode Island police said they arrested a 76-year-old woman caught on camera swiping a \$100 bill dropped by a fellow customer at a clothing store, then shushing a boy who witnessed the act.

Warwick police said Wednesday they charged local resident Dorothy Andrade with misdemeanor larceny in connection with the Nov. 4 incident at a Burlington Coat Factory. She was issued a summons to appear in court.

Authorities said they identified Andrade after posting sur-

veillance video of the incident on Facebook. It shows a shopper dropping something while browsing gift bags, then a woman picking it up and shushing a boy by putting her finger over her lips.

'Survival beer' comes with knife, blanket

DE MILTON — Delaware brewery Dogfish Head will offer a 750 mL bottle of "survival beer" that comes with a Swiss Army knife and wrapped in a solar blanket.

The News Journal in Wilmington reported Friday that the beer is called "It's The End of the World As We Know It." The brew will be limited to 200 bottles that will cost \$45 each.

The brewery said the Belgian-style fruit ale is "chock full of essential amino acids, micronutrients and vitamins." It was made with a blend of "blueberries, acai and goji berries along with an assortment of ingredients including purple sweet potatoes, rose hips, chia seed, flax seed, spelt, oats and quinoa."

It is 9 percent alcohol. It goes on sale Jan. 27 at 11 a.m. at the brewery in Milton.

From wire reports

FACES



Going solo?

Black Widow might be getting her own movie

By KATE FELDMAN/*New York Daily News*

Natasha Romanoff may finally be getting her own movie.

Marvel has hired screenwriter Jac Schaeffer to pen the script for a long-awaited Black Widow standalone movie, according to Variety.

The character originated on the big screen with Scarlett Johansson in "Iron Man 2" and has since appeared in five other Avengers movies. The Black Widow will also join "Avengers: Infinity War" this summer.

A standalone Black Widow movie would be just the second female-led flick from Marvel. "Captain Marvel," starring Brie Larson, is expected to hit theaters March 8, 2019. Jude Law and Ben Mendelsohn have been connected to the movie as well.

Scarlett Johansson is Black Widow in "Marvel's The Avengers."

Marvel

Commercials for Super Bowl are nearly sold out, NBC says

From wire reports

The troubles facing the NFL over the past season — such as national anthem protests, injuries and declining TV ratings — have not deterred advertising demand for NBC's Feb. 4 telecast of Super Bowl LII.

Dan Lovinger, executive vice president, advertising sales for NBC Sports, said at a conference call Jan. 11 that the network expects to take in \$500 million in ad revenue on Super Bowl Sunday, about the same as last year's event. The figure, which includes pregame festivities, the contest itself, postgame, and a special airing of the hit drama series "This Is Us," is roughly equivalent to what the network takes in from its daily morning program "Today" over an entire year.

Lovinger said there were less than 10 spots available in the Super Bowl LII telecast. He said the average price was "north of \$5 million" for a 30-second unit, in line with the pricing in recent years. The last time NBC had the game in 2015, advertisers paid an average of \$4.5 million per spot.

"All we've seen is enthusiasm for the Super Bowl," Lovinger said. "The game itself almost transcends the season."

The audience level for the Super Bowl has towered over the rest of television, delivering 106 million viewers or more since 2010. Last year, the game had an average audience of 111.3 million viewers for Fox, making it the fifth most watched TV event of all time, according to Nielsen. Live events that draw big numbers have become more valuable for advertisers who want their commercials to be seen on the day they air. "There just aren't a lot of places you can find big ratings in a live environment, so advertisers do clamor to those types of opportunities," Lovinger said.

Actresses, shows about women win big at Critics' Choice

It was a good night for women on Jan. 11 at the Critics' Choice Awards, which honored women-centered stories like "Big Little Lies" and "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel." "Wonder Woman" was named best action movie and star Gal Gadot accepted a special award for challenging gender stereotypes.

Yet the industry's sexual misconduct crisis remained an element of the ceremony as James Franco won an acting award early in the evening, hours after a report detailed new misconduct allegations against "The Disaster Artist" star and director.

Franco did not attend Thursday's presentation in Santa Monica, Calif., and his award was presented during a pre-telecast section broadcast only online.

Franco won a similar award at the Golden Globes earlier in the week, where most women dressed in black to protest sexual harassment. More women dressed in color at the Critics' Choice, but their determination to end gender discrimination remained just as fierce. "I want to share this award with all the women and men who stand for what's right, standing for those who can't stand or speak for themselves," Gadot said as she accepted the second annual #SeeHer award. "My promise to you is: I will never be silenced. We will continue to band together to make strides, uniting for equality."

Guillermo del Toro's "The Shape of Water" was the top film winner with four awards. "The Shape of Water," which led all nominees with 14 bids, also claimed the best picture prize, along with score and production design honors.

"Big Little Lies" received four awards: best limited series, as well as acting honors for Nicole Kidman, Alexander Skarsgard and Laura Dern.

Other winners included "The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel" for best comedy series; "Get Out" for best sci-fi or horror film; and Jordan Peele for original screenplay honors; and "Coco" for animated feature and for original song for "Remember Me."

Other news

■ Mary J. Blige, Sterling K. Brown, Issa Rae and Chadwick Boseman will be among the presenters at the NAACP Image Awards. Stars, including actors Michael B. Jordan, Terry Crews, Yara Shahidi and "Get Out" star Daniel Kaluuya are also scheduled to present awards during the Jan. 15 ceremony, which honors entertainers and writers of color.

■ Ricky Martin revealed last week during the premiere of "The Assassination of Gianni Versace: American Crime Story" that he and artist Jwan Yosef recently married.

■ Doreen Tracey, who played one of the original Mouseketeers on "The Mickey Mouse Club" in the 1950s, has died, according to Disney publicist Howard Green. She was 74. Tracey died from pneumonia Jan. 10 at a hospital in Thousand Oaks, Calif., following a two-year battle with cancer.

■ A Connecticut man charged with hacking into more than 250 iCloud accounts of Hollywood stars and ordinary people has agreed to plead guilty. Federal prosecutors say the charge against 26-year-old George Garofano stems from the investigation into the 2014 "celebrity" scandal.



AP

John Fogerty said in a statement he's annoyed the film "Proud Mary" borrows from his song's name without his involvement.

Fogerty irked film borrows from song's name

John Fogerty says he's annoyed that Taraji P. Henson's new film, "Proud Mary," borrows from his popular song's name without his involvement.

Fogerty does not own the rights to his classic song. In a statement released Jan. 11, he says "it irks me when people seek to capitalize on the popularity of my music" for their own financial gain.

Henson plays a hit woman in "Proud Mary," released Jan. 12.

Its trailer uses Tina Turner's version of Fogerty's 1969 song.

Fogerty says the movie "has nothing to do with me, or my song."

The 72-year-old adds that no one ever asked him about using his song that way.

Sony Pictures declined to comment. A representative for Henson didn't return an email seeking comment.

From The Associated Press

Rock legend says he's going deaf, has tinnitus

Rock legend Eric Clapton, 72, revealed Jan. 9 that he's suffering from tinnitus, a ringing in the ear that's commonly caused by noise-induced hearing loss.

"The only thing I'm concerned with now is being in my 70s and being able to be proficient. I mean, I'm going deaf, I've got tinnitus, my hands just about work," Clapton said on BBC Radio 2.

"I mean, I am hoping that people will come along and see

me (for) more than (because) I am a curiosity. I know that is part of it, because it's amazing to myself that I am still here."

In 2016, Clapton revealed that nerve damage has affected his ability to play the guitar.

The musician's only scheduled 2018 show so far is the July British Summer Time Fest in Hyde Park.

New York Daily News

BUSINESS/WEATHER

Bank execs praise GOP tax law as windfall looms

By KEN SWEET
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Two of the nation's biggest banks, JPMorgan Chase and Wells Fargo, indicated Friday they expect to see significant benefits from the recently enacted GOP tax bill, through lower taxes and increased business.

The comments came as the two companies reported their quarterly results, which were both affected by the change in tax laws, but in different ways. JPMorgan Chase took a \$2.4 billion charge tied to the tax bill, while Wells Fargo had a \$3.35 billion benefit.

Bank executives and their lobbyists in Washington were big promoters of a corporate tax cut. Banks are among the highest-taxed industries, largely because they operate here in the U.S. and have regularly paid effective tax rates of 30 percent or more. JPMorgan CEO Jamie Dimon and other company executives for years said

a lower tax rate would not only be good for JPMorgan, but ultimately good for the country as well.

JPMorgan executives say they expect to pass along some of the benefits, currently in unnamed ways, to consumers, employees and shareholders. The bank already raised its minimum wage to \$15 an hour before the tax bill passed, but further wage increases could be on the table. Wells Fargo announced shortly after the bill was passed it would raise its minimum wage to \$15 an hour as well.

Like many banks after the 2008 financial crisis, JPMorgan had billions of dollars of what are known as tax-deferred assets on its balance sheet. Those are basically credits it could have used to pay future income taxes. The credits built up after the big Wall Street banks took billions of dollars in losses from bad mortgages and other toxic assets.

Because the new tax bill low-

ered the corporate tax rate to 21 percent, the value of those tax-deferred assets had to be written down. The \$2.4 billion one-time charge covers the change in value of those assets. Other banks, like Bank of America, Citigroup and Goldman Sachs are expected to take similar actions as they report their results over the next couple of weeks.

JPMorgan now expects its effective corporate tax rate to be roughly 20 percent. In comparison, JPMorgan paid an effective tax rate of 28.4 percent in 2016 and a tax rate of 31.9 percent in 2017. The change will save JPMorgan billions of dollars over coming years. The bank paid \$9.8 billion in income taxes in 2016.

Wells Fargo is unique in that it had deferred tax liabilities, not assets, on its balance sheet, basically income taxes it may owe in the future. Wells Fargo now expects its effective annual tax rate to be around 19 percent.

JPMorgan said Friday it earned \$4.23 billion in the fourth quarter, or \$1.07 a share, down from \$6.73 billion, or \$1.71 a share, in the same period a year earlier. Excluding the \$2.4 billion charge, the bank would have earned \$6.7 billion, or \$1.76 a share.

Outside of the tax bill, JPMorgan's results were positively affected by rising interest rates. Being able to charge customers more to borrow helped boost the bank's net interest income by 11 percent to \$13.03 billion.

But other parts of JPMorgan's businesses, most notably its trading desks, did not fare as well in the quarter. JPMorgan's trading division reported revenue of \$4.4 billion in the quarter, down 22 percent from a year earlier.

Wells Fargo said it earned \$6.15 billion in the fourth quarter, or \$1.16 per share, compared with \$5.27 billion, or 96 cents per share, in the same period a year ago. Wells continues to try to shake

off the fallout from its 2016 sales scandal and a subsequent scandal in mid-2017 in which the bank sold car insurance policies to customers who didn't need it.

While profits in the consumer banking division rose to \$3.67 billion, compared with \$2.73 billion in the same period a year ago, much of that growth was tied to the tax gain that Wells Fargo recorded this quarter. Consumer loans fell to \$956.8 billion from \$967.6 billion a year earlier. The bank's net interest margin also did not improve in the quarter.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs (Jan. 15)	\$1.2450
Dollar buys (Jan. 15)	69.8032
British pound (Jan. 15)	\$1.40
Japanese yen (Jan. 15)	109.00
South Korean won (Jan. 15)	1,037.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770
British pound	\$1.3734
Canada (Dollar)	1.2485
China (Yuan)	6.4603
Denmark (Krone)	6.1148
Egypt (Pound)	17.7085
Euro	\$1.2181/6.8209
Hong Kong (Dollar)	1.2827
Hungary (Forint)	253.36
Israel (Shekel)	3.3935
Japan (Yen)	111.06
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.3012
Norway (Krone)	7.9238
Philippines (Peso)	50.43
Poland (Zloty)	3.42
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7506
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3255
South Korea (Won)	1,059.88
Switzerland (Franc)	0.8687
Taiwan (Dollar)	3.1941
Turkey (New Lira)	7.3694
(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For nonmilitary exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military banking facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)	

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	4.50
Discount rate	2.00
Federal funds market rate	1.42
3-month bill	1.44
30-year bond	2.85

Lawmakers to DOJ: Keep online gambling legal

By WAYNE PARRY
Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — Federal lawmakers who represent New Jersey from both parties have asked the Justice Department to keep internet gambling legal.

In a letter Thursday to Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein, the lawmakers urged the department not to rescind its 2011 legal opinion that says internet gambling is permissible under federal law.

Internet gambling is a thriving industry in New Jersey, helping Atlantic City's seven casinos recover from a three-year period in which five of the city's 12 casinos closed. The additional money brought in online often makes the difference between an up month and a down month for the city's casinos.

Figures released Friday show Atlantic City's casinos made \$245 million online in 2017, an increase of nearly 25 percent from 2016.

The letter was signed by New Jersey's two Democratic senators, Bob Menendez and Cory Booker, along with Republican Reps. Frank LoBiondo, Leonard Lance and Tom MacArthur and Democrats Josh Gottheimer, Albio Sires, Bonnie Watson Coleman, Bill Pascrell Jr. and Donald Payne Jr.

It was a response to a letter in November from Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham, of South Carolina, and Democratic Sen. Dianne Feinstein, of California, asking the Justice Department to change course and have Congress determine whether to permit online gambling.

That unlikely pairing voiced concern about a rapid, unchecked spread of gambling — something that has not happened. Only four

states — New Jersey, Nevada, Delaware and Pennsylvania — have legalized internet gambling, and New Jersey's regulatory standards are considered the strictest in the nation.

Graham and Feinstein repeated their warning of several years ago that the Justice Department opinion permitting internet gambling "could usher in the most fundamental change in gambling in our lifetimes by turning every smartphone, tablet and personal computer in our country into a casino available 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

But the New Jersey lawmakers said their state has proven online gambling can be done safely and responsibly.

The Justice Department said it has received the New Jersey delegation's letter, but it would not say whether it is considering changing its 2011 opinion regarding internet gambling.

WEATHER OUTLOOK

MONDAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST



MONDAY IN EUROPE



TUESDAY IN THE PACIFIC



The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

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The Daily Guide to Navigating the European Business Market



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OPINION

Trump's lame excuse for avoiding London

By THERESE RAPHAEL
Bloomberg View

In case some dedicated soul is keeping track of all the "for the record" corrections thrown up by President Donald Trump's misstatements, here's one more to log in: Trump's sweet Friday about why he won't be visiting London.

"Reason I canceled my trip to London is that I am not a big fan of the Obama Administration having sold perhaps the best located and finest embassy in London for 'peanuts,' only to build a new one in an off location for 1.2 billion dollars. Bad deal. Wanted me to cut ribbon-No!" he tweeted Tuesday.

Londoners know better. Trump's on-again, off-again visit was a source of dread in British officialdom, from Buckingham Palace to Downing Street, where Theresa May had much cause to regret her rash offer of a state visit a year ago. Nearly 2 million people petitioned to have the visit withdrawn back then; nearly half of respondents in a December poll said they wanted the visit scrapped. It soon became clear that Trump would have been greeted by a wall of protesters and subjected to the full, cut-you-down-to-size force of Britain's tabloids. The trip had already been downgraded to a "working visit."

"It appears that President Trump got the message from the many Londoners who love and admire America and Americans but find his policies and actions the polar opposite of our city's values of inclusion, diversity and tolerance," said London Mayor Sadiq Kahn, who has been vocal in opposing Trump's stance on immigration and foreigners.

But what of the U.S. Embassy — that great, eagle-capped nerve center of American government activity in the capital city of the closest U.S. ally? Like Trump, I was initially disappointed about the move from an iconic building in tiny Mayfair to Vauxhall, south of the River Thames, a change of address that, as one British commentator put it, was like swapping Park Avenue for New Jersey. But it also made perfect sense.

That decision was made not by former President Barack Obama, as Trump has claimed, but by a former Republican president, George W. Bush. For one thing, the existing building on Grosvenor Square, designed by



ALASTAIR GRANT/AP

The sculpture "Modern Marriage 2015 by Simon Fujiwara" sits outside the new United States Embassy building in London on Friday.

the Finnish-born modernist architect Eero Saarinen and opened in 1960, was too small to accommodate a staff that had quadrupled in size since then. For another, it was a massive security hazard.

In response to the heightened terrorist threat after the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the U.S. had required all its embassies to tighten security dramatically, in part by creating 100-foot setbacks around their circumstances. The newly fortified area around the London embassy had become known as "the Green Zone," a sarcastic reference to the heavily guarded government area in central Baghdad, Iraq. Well-heeled neighbors complained that the embassy's security measures were a blight on the genteel Georgian square and that the U.S. had overstepped its boundaries.

The Bush administration was focused on security and had adopted an embassy design model that resulted in, as former Secretary of Defense William Cohen put it, charmless "concrete bunker" embassies. Some diplomats claimed they were so depressing to look at that they were bad for local relationship-building. The Obama administration sought to correct this with a design-led program that invited architects to imagine embassies that reflected the best of American design and were respectful of the culture of the host country, while meet-

ing modern security needs.

Trump's complaint that the old building — which was bought by the investor Qatari Diar and will be turned into a luxury hotel — was sold for "peanuts" is also off-target. The embassy was apparently sold for about \$431 million (the land underneath the building, in a quirk of English property law, is actually owned by the Duke of Westminster).

It might have been worth substantially more, but Saarinen's building had been designated by English Heritage as "listed." Under English law, that means it is considered historically significant and cannot be destroyed or substantially altered. The listing ruled out rebuilding the embassy on the same site and lowered its market value.

The new, \$1 billion cube-shaped embassy has double the space of the old Mayfair address. It has a moat and is highly secure but not obtrusively so (bollards are hidden behind thick hedges), and it occupies a 4.9-acre plot. Photovoltaic roof panels, a ground-source heat pump for renewable energy, tenon flushed with collected rainwater and abundant green space earned it an environmental rating of "outstanding." It is located on what is now Europe's largest regeneration project, which meant that the U.S. acquired the site relatively cheaply while contributing significantly to local development (prices in the area have risen steeply since the U.S. purchase), whatever one thinks of the contrast with Mayfair.

The embassy will open on schedule and the ribbon is now expected to be cut by Secretary of State Rex Tillerson. As Richard Haas, president of the Council on Foreign Relations, tweeted Friday in reply to Trump's announcement:

"US London embassy relocated for security reasons; we have learned the hard way American diplomats at risk. But sad when a visit by a Potus to our closest ally is cancelled b/c he is not welcome. Europeans increasingly reject illiberal foreign, domestic policies of this president."

Sad indeed. Unless you're a Londoner.

Theresa Raphael writes editorials on European politics and economics for Bloomberg View. She was editorial page editor of The Wall Street Journal Europe.

Dear Mr. President: Please, no Norwegians!!!

By SIGNE WILKINSON

Special to The Washington Post News Service

PHILADELPHIA
The summer before last, my family spent two weeks investigating Norway, and I can say with some certainty that we do not want more Norwegians coming to the United States.

For starters, they are just too darned good-looking. The middle-aged hostesses on our Norwegian airlines were more beautiful than Scarlett Johansson. No one there has any detectable body fat, so they look good in whatever they wear. Even the Norwegian women wearing wedding dresses when President Donald Trump recently referred to as "s---hole countries" look great, and the biracial young people we saw working in museums, stores and cafes were stunning. I mean, even more beautiful than anyone on the Philadelphia City Council.

Letting in too many gorgeous people will damage our already rocky self-esteem and we'll have to listen to more Oprahs and Dr. Phils telling us how to deal with it. Norwegians, by the way, deal with it by vacationing in Greece.

Secondly, they apparently know how to run a country. Not only do they have universal health care, six-week vacations and an

excellent school system, their public transportation is superb. Their cities and towns are amazingly clean, though it's true that, as tourists, we didn't hang out a lot on the gritty side of the tracks. I was secretly glad to see, however, that the walls along the tracks we traveled were lined with subpar graffiti. Made me feel at home.

I know, I know. It's a small country (only 5.26 million beautiful people) and if they let French people in, as Philadelphia used to do, or others from more southerly countries, the place would probably go to heck. There are other downsides. They didn't seem to have much by way of an American with Disabilities Act. There's a step up from the platform to their modern train cars, and there are no ramps. Instead, when an elderly lady couldn't manage it, random Norwegians on the platform stepped in and gently picked her up by her elbows and helped her get situated in the car with her baggage. While that method warded off minor libertarianism, I'm not sure it would work on Philadelphia's mass-transit system.

Another downside was that Norway is brimming with Teslas. We were told that their purchase was subsidized. There were electric charging stations all over the place. Really, it doesn't speak well of a country to be assisting Elon Musk in any possible way.

Still, that's the kind of thing they do to keep their carbon footprint down.

One other reason President Trump might reconsider his sudden Norwegian enthusiasm is that immigrants from Norway, and nearby countries like it, have come here and produced female editorial cartoonists! I'm one-quarter Norwegian blood. Ann Tlaenes, the most brilliant and most caustic Trump caricaturist, is of Swedish stock, and Jens Sorensen, whose drawing pen is a Viking spear, descends from Danes.

Still, in an effort to get on the president's team, I invited my tall, svelte, handsome Norwegian cartooning colleague, Roar Hagan, and his tall, svelte, beautiful wife to move to America. His response was, "I love America and Americans. But life here is, except the climate, quite good."

So, Mr. President, if you really want more Norwegians, all you have to do is guarantee free universal health care, decent vacations, environmentally friendly transportation and great schools that teach everyone how to speak, write and read English better than we do. That would, indeed, improve our country.

Signe Wilkinson is a Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoonist whose work is syndicated by The Washington Post Writers Group.

OPINION

Evangelicals should reject 's---hole' view

By ED STETZER

Special to The Washington Post

When my ancestors came to America from Ireland, they left what many people considered a "s---hole" country. A potato famine, combined with Ireland's bad reputation in much of Europe, led many to call for an end to the immigration of the unwashed Irish.

"Filthy," they called my family.

But, let's face it, the disdain they suffered is nothing like what people from other parts of the world have experienced. We would hope, however, that such labels are an embarrassing relic of the past.

Yet on Thursday, during a meeting with lawmakers on immigration reform, President Donald Trump was quoted as saying, "Why are we having all these people from s---hole countries come here?"

Although the White House did not deny Trump's remarks that day, on Friday morning Trump suggested on Twitter that the comment was "tough, but this was not the language used." Either way, it was obviously shocking to those in the room, and he didn't deny his underlying sentiments.

This is not the first time that Trump has horribly caricatured immigrants. During his presidential campaign he said of undocumented Mexican immigrants, "They're bringing drugs, they're bringing crime, they're rapists, and some, I assume, are good people."

So, the commander in chief used a filthy or "tough" word to the point that it stunned those who heard it. But beyond the profanity, the most startling part of his remark is his suggestion that certain people's living conditions should disqualify them from immigrating to the United States.

Mr. President, we have all these people coming here because of who they think we are — the kind of nation that believes all people are worthy of dignity and respect. They want to come here just like my ancestors did, even when they were called filthy.



Ducier Sarah Roudencia, 7, sharpens her pencil while she studies her lesson in the Caradeux refugee camp set up nearly eight years ago for people displaced by the 2010 earthquake, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, on Thursday.
DIEU NALIO CHERY AP

I've walked in places where words like this would literally describe the streets — open sewers, for example, in a favela in northeastern Brazil, or the slums outside Kumasi, Ghana. There is still poverty where I've walked in urban Johannesburg. And, yes, they are, at times, quite literally, places (and holes) where feces run in the streets.

But those places are filled with people made in the image of God. Yes, they want to come to America, and let's consider why.

First, they hope for a better life. The United States doesn't just offer economic or medical benefits but the very freedoms we often take for granted. The freedoms to speak, worship, work and advance have been and continue to be the aspirations of immigrants. What was true for the Irish landing at Ellis Island is true for the Haitians landing at the Miami airport.

Second, they want what's best for their children. The story of American immigration is a story about generational aspiration. Immigrants and refugees from filthy or "s---hole" nations recognized that through their sacrifice their children might realize their full potential in America. My ancestors did.

It's beneath us to speak of countries as "s---holes," perhaps in a way that is beneath us to say that undocumented Mexicans are "rapists" or murderers, though with "some ... good people."

Maybe a country that consistently has one of the higher child poverty rates among developed nations, averages almost seven mass shootings a week and has seen its standing in education test scores drop to below average shouldn't be so quick to disparage others. With a dose of humility, we can remember it is safer in some of the countries Trump cited than in some parts of Chicago right now.

Trump has courted evangelicals, some of whom have had access to him and his administration. I hope those evangelical leaders will speak clearly, reminding Trump that all people are worthy of dignity and respect because they are made in the image of God.

Also, just a reminder: The countries he is speaking of might seem far away, but the people who live there are not so different from you and me. In fact, what some might casually call "s---hole countries" are filled with people whom evangelicals call their brothers and sisters in Christ. Africa, for

example, has the fastest-growing evangelical community as a percentage of population and is projected to become the largest evangelical continent in the world. They are part of my family — and yours.

When I preach around the country, I see immigrants from all over the world. The bond that I share with worshippers outpaces any earthly citizenship. When the apostle Paul said in Philippians 3:20 that Christians are "citizens of heaven," he was not only speaking of our hope. He was reminding us of the common identity believers share that supersedes all others.

Some come from places that some people call "s---holes," but they are part of my family. And I don't like to hear my family and their homes disparaged, whatever the exact phrase.

And I don't think we should speak up simply because some people from those countries are evangelicals but because all people — of whatever (or no) faith — are worthy of dignity and respect. However, I do think that it's worth noting that a president who courts evangelicals should hear from them when he besmirches their brothers and sisters in Christ and the pain of their living conditions.

America's immigration policy faces serious challenges that cannot be solved with simplistic political tropes. The government needs to be discerning about the who and why of immigration that correctly balances short-term and long-term benefits. I don't believe in open borders, and I'm not looking for unrestricted and unwise immigration policy.

However, this is not up for debate: Describing Haiti and African countries as s---holes, or some variant of that pejorative, is not worthy of our nation or its president. All people are made in the image of God, and when we speak of them or their living conditions, we should do so with dignity and respect.

Ed Stetzer leads the Billy Graham Distinguished Chair of Church, Mission and Evangelism at Wheaton College.

VA to begin paying up to \$22,000 non-VA emergency claims

By TOM PHILPOTT

Special to Stars and Stripes

The Department of Veterans Affairs published a revised rule Tuesday that allows payment of hundreds of thousands of pending claims for private-sector emergency care that veterans' other health insurance covered in part but not in full.

Some pending claims for non-VA emergency care were filed as far back as 2010 and were kept alive by appeal. In some cases, individual reimbursements owed will total tens of thousands of dollars — for example, for emergency heart surgery or other complex procedures not covered well by alternative health plans.

The revised rule says it won't allow retroactive reimbursements for non-VA emergency care claim decisions that became final before April 8, 2016, the day the VA lost a landmark federal court fight with Air Force veteran Richard W. Staab.

Staab faced roughly \$48,000 in unpaid private hospital bills after emergency heart surgery in December 2010. At the time the VA had told Staab, and any other veteran forced to use outside emergency care, that the department would have covered the cost of such care if they had had no other health insurance.

Staab was eligible for Medicare, and because Medicare paid a portion of his

MILITARY UPDATE

emergency care cost, the VA under longstanding regulations had no obligation to cover remaining private-sector emergency costs. Staab's attorneys argued that the VA, when it revised regulations in 2012, ignored the clear intent of a statute passed in 2009 to correct the VA's convoluted interpretation of its payment obligations for outside emergency care.

Staab won a few lower court decisions, which the VA appealed. Final victory came in a unanimous decision by a three-judge panel on the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims in April 2016. The appellate court said the VA had ignored the "plain language" of the 2009 law requiring the "VA to reimburse a veteran for that portion of expenses not covered by a health plan contract."

For more than a year the VA pondered another appeal. But VA Secretary David Shulkin last June accepted defeat and said the regulation would be revised to comply with the court's decision. One reason for the long delay was money. The VA had estimated that if the Staab decision were allowed to stand, it would have to pay almost \$2 billion on pending claims and more than \$10 billion for a tidal wave of private-sector emergency care claims expected over just

the next decade.

The Jan. 9 rule specifically expands eligibility for reimbursement of non-VA emergency treatment to veterans who receive only partial payment for such care from a health plan contract. It also establishes a reimbursement methodology for payments. They are to cover "reasonable costs," to include hospital charges, professional fees and emergency transportation including ambulance services.

By law, the VA said, it cannot reimburse for co-pays, cost shares or deductibles required by other health insurance that veterans have. More information on the revised rule and related guidance is available at <https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/programs/veterans/EmergencyCare.asp>. The rule notice can be read in its entirety at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-01-09/pdf/2018-00232.pdf>.

The rule explains that when a judicial decision invalidates a VA regulation or how it interprets a law, it "cannot affect prior final VA decisions," citing two earlier federal court decisions. Therefore, the VA will not retroactively pay benefits for claims [that] were finally denied before April 8, 2016, date of the Staab decision. In other words, VA can only apply the [rule] to claims pending on or after April 8, 2016."

Since the Staab decision, the VA had suspended action on any claim for non-VA emergency care. By Sept. 29 last year,

claims "held in abeyance" totaled 822,000.

The VA is now processing those claims using its revised rule.

Staab's attorneys, agreed with the VA's contention in its revised rule that final denials of earlier claims — from Feb. 1, 2010, the effective date of the law that expanded VA payment obligations, to April 8, 2016, the date of the Staab appellate decision affirming that intent — cannot be revised or reimbursed. Staab initially disagreed with the VA's finding in its revised rule that Staab could not be used by veterans whose claims for non-VA emergency care became final before April 8, 2016, believing final claims could be re-filed based on "clear and unmistakable error." But having reviewed the two court cases the VA cited in its rule, Staab said the VA is following case law correctly in finding that Staab does not benefit veterans whose claims for non-VA emergency care became final before the decision date.

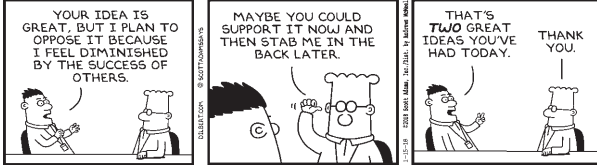
Courts have interpreted the "clear and unmistakable error" rule for reconsideration of claims as not valid if based "on a new court interpretation of the law," Staab said. Therefore, the VA doesn't have to apply Staab retroactively to claims finally denied before that decision.

Sends comments to Military Update, P.O. Box 231111, Centerville, VA, 20120; email militaryupdate@aol.com; Twitter: @Military_Update.

Frazz



Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



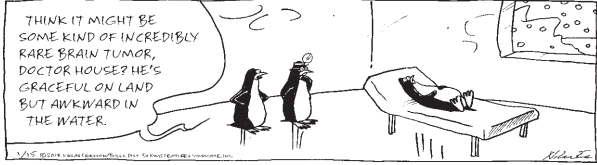
Non Sequitur



Candorville



Carpe Diem



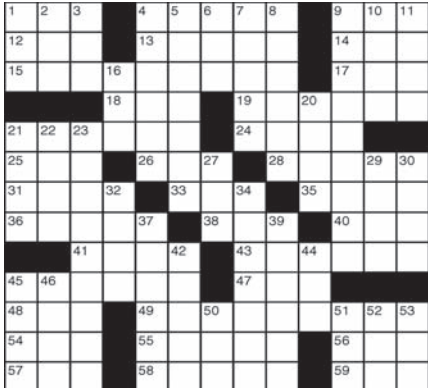
Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



ACROSS

- 1 Dandy guy
- 4 Reading lights
- 9 TV schedule abbr.
- 12 Small batteries
- 13 Worship
- 14 Sinbad's bird
- 15 "Ironman" competition
- 17 Doctrine
- 18 Hwy.
- 19 Figure out
- 21 More rainy
- 24 Swindle
- 25 Corn spike
- 26 Collection
- 28 In plentiful amounts
- 31 Composer Satie
- 33 Plant seeds
- 35 Actor LaBeauf

DOWN

- 1 Obese
- 2 Scull tool
- 3 Omega precursor
- 4 Coffee bar orders
- 5 Sticks
- 6 Actress Gretchen
- 7 Goats
- 8 New York tribe
- 9 Celebrating a win
- 10 Pear variety
- 11 Pinnacle
- 16 Illustrations

- 20 River blockers
- 21 Coach Ewbank
- 22 British noble
- 23 Test drives
- 27 AAA job
- 29 Ovid's 53
- 30 Harvard rival
- 32 Leg joint
- 34 Reception amenity
- 37 Cuba's Fidel
- 39 Outfits
- 42 Challenged
- 44 Allow
- 45 Snitch
- 46 Actress Falco
- 50 "As I see it," in a text
- 51 Berliner's cry
- 52 Carnival city
- 53 Chatter

Answer to Previous Puzzle

J	E	T	S	H	A	O	S	W	A	Y
A	L	A	L	L	U	L	U	W	I	R
M	L	I	E	R	M	A	A	S	T	A
B	A	L	L	E	T	S	L	I	P	P
			I	V	S		I	N	S	
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CRYPTOQUIP

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Today's Cryptoquip Clue: O equals F


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Announcements 040

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Automotive 140

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Singles Final
Roberto Bautista Agut (5), Spain, def.
Juan Martin del Potro (2), Argentina, 6-1,
4-6, 7-5.

Scoreboard

ERIC GAY/AP

HIGH SCHOOL: DODEA EUROPE

NEWS AND NOTES FROM THE WEEKEND

Naples girls, Wiesbaden boys undefeated

Stars and Stripes

DODEA Europe resumed its 2017-18 winter sports season this week with a heavy schedule that included championship rematches in basketball, the organization's annual postal marksmanship sessions and three key wrestling meets.

The first action of 2018 opens the stretch run to the fast-approaching European championships. Marksmanship comes first with its final set for Feb. 3 at Kaiserslautern. Wrestling's post-season includes Feb. 10 sectional meets and the Feb. 16-17 championship meet at Wiesbaden. Basketball's four-day tournament concludes the winter season Feb. 21-24 at Wiesbaden.

Alconbury: The Dragons take a breather after a busy basketball weekend in Brussels. Alconbury returns to the hardwood Jan. 26-27 against visiting

AFNORTH.

AFNORTH: Late heroics by girls basketball star Kayla Lambiasi led the Lions to a doubleheader sweep of Spangdahlem over the weekend. Lambiasi hit a pair of free throws with under two seconds to play to force overtime in AFNORTH's 23-18 win Saturday, a day after she scored 14 points in a 32-15 triumph.

American Overseas School of Rome: The Falcons recovered its signature boys basketball victory Saturday as part of a hard-fought doubleheader split with Division I Naples. AOSR fought back from an eight-point halftime deficit to seize the 74-70 victory.

Ansbach: The Cougars restarted their girls basketball season in impressive fashion Friday at Brussels. Ansbach routed Alconbury 36-15 for its second divisional win of the winter.

Aviano: The Saints had no trouble with visiting Florence in a boys basketball doubleheader Saturday. Mason Shine scored a combined 36 points in the pair of mercy-rule routs.

Baumholder: The Bucs took two boys basketball wins over Hohenfels last weekend, a close 44-42 Friday decision and a more comfortable 61-32 Saturday rout. Nate Horton totaled 43 points over the two games.

Black Forest Academy: The Falcons, defending Division II European champions in both boys and girls basketball, enjoyed successful weekends on both fronts. BFA swept divisional rival Rota in boys and girls doubleheaders Friday and Saturday.

Brussels: The Brigands played stingy hosts to their Division III girls basketball guests over the weekend. Brussels held two opponents to single-digit scoring, including a 16-8 defeat of Sigonella and a 19-9 win over Alconbury.

Hohenfels: The Tigers girls basketball team picked up two solid road wins at Baumholder, winning 29-14 on Friday and 41-14 on Saturday. Billyanna Garland scored 31 points over the two games.

Kaiserslautern: The Raiders enjoyed a strong second-place showing in the wrestling meet they hosted Saturday. The dependable duo of 195-pound Hunter Wiles and 220-pound Royce Staley were among Kaiserslautern's first-place finishers.

Lakenheath: The Lancers recovered from Friday boys and girls basketball losses to Kaiserslautern with matching wins over the same opponent Saturday. Asha Snipes scored 20 in the girls' 43-40 win, while Grady Wright notched 18 in the boys' 62-51 victory.

Naples: The Wildcats are the last undefeated girls team in Division I, and they played like it last weekend in Rome. Naples dispatched host AOSR 56-16 and 54-17 to move to 6-0.

Ramstein: A thunderous slam dunk late Friday was one of many highlights for Naser Eaves and the Royals boys basketball team last weekend. Eaves scored 21 and 24 points, respectively, in Ramstein's 69-55 Friday win and 80-53 Saturday win.

Rota: A week after facing BFA, the Admirals continue a rare busy stretch of DODEA Europe hoops this weekend. Rota is one of four teams in action in the two-day Division II basketball meet set for Friday and Saturday at Aviano.

SHAPE: The smaller Spartans roster held its own in Saturday's wrestling meet at Kaiserslautern. Runners-up Zak Kappenman (152 pounds) and



MICHAEL B. KELLER/Stars and Stripes

Ramstein's Gabe Fraley, left, goes for a layup past Stuttgart's Jarriion Smith at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, on Friday. Ramstein won 69-55.

Chris Davidson (220) led the SHAPE showing.

Sigonella: Jessica Jacobs led the Jaguars to a pair of solid Division III victories at the four-team girls basketball meet at Brussels over the weekend. Jacobs totaled 12 points, eight rebounds and four steals in a 38-14 rout of Alconbury and posted 11 points and four steals in a 27-22 win over Ansbach.

Spangdahlem: The Sentinels recorded two sizeable wins over Division II boys basketball opponent AFNORTH over the weekend. The 57-31 and 60-42 wins kept Spangdahlem undefeated on the season.

Stuttgart: The Panthers displayed some championship grit in a 40-33 girls basketball win over Ramstein on Saturday. The victory came a day after Stuttgart blew a late lead and watched the archival Royals claim a stunning 39-37 overtime win.

Vicenza: The Cougars tuned up for next weekend's boys basketball clash with Naples over the weekend with a pair of wins over Marymount. The 48-43 and 63-36 wins snapped a three-game losing skid for the squad.

Vilseck: The Falcons were one of the few basketball programs to sit idle as the winter season ramped up again last weekend. Vilseck takes the floor Friday and Saturday with a home-and-home series against local rival Hohenfels.

Wiesbaden: The Warriors basketball teams have experienced very different seasons so far this winter, but both were equally jubilant this weekend. The boys swept SHAPE to stay undefeated, while the girls matched the sweep and picked up their first Division I wins.

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HIGH SCHOOL: DODEA PACIFIC

NEWS AND NOTES FROM THE WEEKEND



DAVE ORNAUER/STARS AND STRIPES

Kinnick's Darius Swenson scores a two-point throw on Perry's Andrew Borero in the 158-pound final during Saturday's Kinnick Invitational wrestling tournament. Swenson beat Borero by decision 9-6.

Devils prove to be beasts

DYOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan
arius Swenson needed to make a couple of major moves. He trailed 4-0 after one period and needed to rally against a fellow headliner in a 158-pound weight class observers call one of the toughest in the Far East this season.

So Swenson, a senior, executed a five-point throw on Perry senior Andrew Borero, to rally for a 9-6 decision and the title in Saturday's Kinnick Invitational "Beast of the Far East" Tournament.

"I don't come in expecting anything," said Swenson, one of four Red Devils to win titles. Kinnick scored 79 points to win the team title, 21 points ahead of runner-up St. Mary's.

"Your own hubris will kill you. He's the toughest (wrestler) I've faced all season, and he's not just a tough competitor, he's a great guy to talk to off the mat."

For Swenson and the Red Devils, the meet was the major in-season preparation for the Far East tournament, scheduled for Feb. 1-3 also at Yokosuka.

"I like what my kids showed today," said Kinnick coach Gary Wilson, who also got titles from 215-pounder Chris Mason, former two-time Far East champion Lucas Wirth (129) and reigning Far East champion Devoney Stanley (135).

E.J. King: After dropping their first game at Edgren, the girls basketball team rallied to close the weekend with two wins. Zanitta Boyd averaged 16 points and Claire May 15.5 as King edged the host Eagles 40-37 and romped 61-35 over Perry.



Edgren: The number 10 seemed to be the magic one for Eagles rebounding specialist Christina Taylor. She had 10 boards in all three Eagles games, including Friday's 47-37 win over King and 56-18 triumph over Perry.

M.C. Perry: Heavyweight Marshall China garnered the Samura's lone title at "Beast." Jonathan Amjio scored 24 points and the Perry boys basketball team closed the weekend at Edgren with an 81-74 win Saturday over the Eagles, after dropping two games on Friday.

Yokota: The girls won their second straight on Saturday with senior guard Jamia Bailey back in the lineup. She saw limited action after undergoing surgery to remove a blood clot over the holidays. Two days earlier, Bailey stole the ball and hit a game-winning shot against Seisen.

Zama: Rafael Labrador, Jeremiah Stewart and Armelia Baldwin on Wednesday salvaged a lackluster week for Trojans sports. Labrador and Stewart had 11 points each as Zama routed St. Maur 52-34. Baldwin's 14 points boosted Zama to a 44-16 win at Yokohama.

Humphreys: Quintin Metcalf continues to own the paint for Blackhaws boys basketball, chasing their third straight Green Blue regular-season title.

The 2017 Far East Division I Tournament MVP had 26 points, 22 boards and five blocks as Humphreys routed Daegu 75-42 on Saturday.



Seoul American: Miguel Villareal nearly totaled a triple-double for Falcons boys basketball, with 22 points, 10 rebounds and six steals as Seoul American got its biggest margin of victory of the season, 59-36 Saturday over Taejon Christian. The Falcons are now 2-6.

Daegu: It was all about foul shooting for Warriors girls basketball. They shot 19-for-36 at the line to 4-for-19 by the Blackhaws, and Daegu outlasted Humphreys 54-53 in overtime Saturday. Dajia Turner had 21 points and 16 rebounds and Bethani Newbold 27 points for Daegu.

Osan: Maja Ithavivay scored nine points to lead the girls basketball team, which burst in front 12-3 and hung on to win 33-29 Friday at Seoul Foreign. It was the lone victory for a Cougars basketball team over the weekend.

Kadena: Senior Rhamsey Wyche, who'd been producing below the level she did in 2016 when she was the Far East D-I MVP, broke out for 31 points on Saturday and 21 on Sunday as the Panthers won 56-37 and 63-56 in the Taipei American Basketball Exchange.

Kubasaki: Elonzo Higginson III averaged 19 points and Jonathan Baker 16 as the boys basketball team also swept its games with Taipei American, winning 81-72 on Saturday and 63-51 on Sunday.



— Stars and Stripes

Jackson, who called 'Whoa, Nelly!', dies

By JAY REEVES
Associated Press

Keith Jackson laid down the soundtrack to Saturday for a generation of college football fans with phrases such as his signature "Whoa, Nelly!"

From the World Series to the Olympics, NFL to NBA, he did it all over five decades as a sportscaster, but most appropriately his final assignment before retiring 12 years ago was one of the greatest college football games ever.

Jackson died Friday. He was 89. A statement by ESPN, which consolidated with ABC Sports, Jackson's longtime employer, announced his death Saturday. No cause was given. He was a longtime resident of Sherman Oaks, Calif., and died near his home there.

A native of west Georgia, near the Alabama border, his smooth baritone voice and use of phrases like "big uglies" for linemen gave his game calls a familiar feel.

"He was one of our giants," longtime broadcaster Brent Musburger told The Associated Press. "He could do anything and loved doing it."

Jackson might be best known for his "Whoa, Nelly!" exclamation, but he didn't overuse it. Borrowed from his great-grandfather, a farmer, the phrase also part of a commercial Jackson did for Miller Lite in the mid-'90s. But it was no catchphrase.

"He never made anything up," Musburger said. "That's how Keith talked."

In a Fox Sports interview in 2013, Jackson said his folksy language stemmed from his rural upbringing and he became comfortable with the usage through the years.

"I would go around and pluck things off the bush and see if I could find a different way to say some things. And the older I got the more willing I was to go back into the Southern vernacular because some of it's funny," Jackson said.

ESPN "College GameDay" host Rece Davis, who grew up in Alabama, said listening to Jackson assured him that it was OK for a national broadcaster to sound Southern.



RICHARD SHOTWELL INVISION/AP

Keith Jackson, the down-home voice of college football during more than five decades as a broadcaster, died Friday. He was 89.

"Some people become the voice of the sport through their expertise, which Keith certainly had. But it's almost as if the good Lord created that voice, which sounds like what red clay ought to sound like if it could talk, to be the perfect voice for college football," Davis told the AP.

Jackson is a member of the Sports Broadcasting Hall of Fame, and called more Rose Bowl games, 15, than any other announcer.

"When you heard his voice, you knew it was a big game," said Bob Iger, chairman and chief executive of The Walt Disney Co., which owns ESPN.

Jackson's death comes just three weeks after that of another sportscasting titan — Dick Enberg, known for his own excited calls of "Oh, my!" during a 60-year career.

Kirk Herbstreit was among the college football broadcasters paying tribute to Jackson on social media.

"Can close my eyes and think of so many of his special calls. Thank you Keith for all the memories and the grace in which you provided them," Herbstreit posted on Twitter.

After serving four years in the Marine Corps, Jackson broadcast his first college football game in 1952 as an undergraduate at Washington State. He worked in radio and television before joining ABC Sports in 1966.

Jackson first announced his retirement in 1998 but returned to work. He retired for good after the 2006 Rose Bowl, when he called Texas' upset of Southern California for the BCS championship on Vince Young's last-minute touchdown scramble.

"Fourth-and-5. The national championship on the line right here," Jackson said right before Young took the snap on that memorable play. "He's going for the conerrrrrr. He's got it! Vince. Young. Scores."

The Rose Bowl stadium's radio and TV booths were renamed in his honor two years ago. He is in the Rose Bowl Hall of Fame for his contributions to the New Year's Day game, which is he credited with nicknaming "The Granddaddy of Them All."

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Wagner, Michigan upset No. 4 Michigan State

Wolverines pull away late

BY LARRY LAGE
Associated Press

EAST LANSING, Mich. — Moritz Wagner flicked his right wrist, made a three-pointer and pressed his right index fingers against his lips.

And, there wasn't anything Michigan State players or fans could do about it.

Wagner scored a career-high 27 points, lifting Michigan to an 82-72 victory over the fourth-ranked Spartans on Saturday.

Making his performance even more impressive, he played through a lingering injury.

"We didn't know if Moe would play," coach John Beilein said. "He tweaked the ankle. We have a trainer, Alex Wong, who needs a shout-out for this one."

Wagner was 8-for-13, making 3 of 4 three-pointers, and shot over and drove past every player who attempted to defend him.

"He's a pick-and-pop guy and it's tough to guard him," Michigan State's Miles Bridges said. "We could tell he really wanted that game."

Wagner, who was jeered by the fans before it was clear Michigan was going to win, celebrated the victory by shouting with joy and bouncing around the court.

Michigan State coach Tom Izzo compared Wagner to former Spartans guard Scott Skiles, who taunted the Wolverines while scoring against them in the mid-1980s.

"He talked it," Izzo said. "He walked it. He played it."

The Wolverines (15-4, 4-2 Big Ten) have won eight of nine games this season and two straight against their rivals.

The Spartans (16-3, 4-2) are struggling, losing two of three games with an overtime



AL GOLDS/AP

Michigan's Moritz Wagner, right, drives against Michigan State's Gavin Golds on Saturday in East Lansing, Mich. Wagner scored a career-high 27 points to lead the Wolverines to an 82-72 upset victory over the Spartans.

win over Rutgers in between the setbacks.

"We have to do some soul-searching," Izzo acknowledged.

Zavier Simpson made a go-ahead layup with 14:28 left, the 13th lead change in an intense game with 11 ties. He helped the Wolverines pull away in the final minutes

with enough free throws to keep a cushion. Simpson finished with 16 points, taking advantage of a game plan that called for him and his teammates to drive toward the basket against a shut-blocking team.

"Our guards could not get over the screens," Izzo said.

'He talked it. He walked it. He played it.'

Tom Izzo

Michigan State coach, on the Wolverines' Moritz Wagner, whom he compared to former Spartans guard Scott Skiles, who taunted the Wolverines while scoring against them in the mid-1980s.

Bridges had 19 points, six rebounds, five assists and two steals. Bridges gave up the ball four times as one of many turnover-prone Spartans. Michigan scored 26 points off Michigan State's 18 turnovers.

"It's going to be tough for me to live this down," said Bridges, who will not play the Wolverines again unless they meet in the Big Ten or NCAA Tournaments — if the sophomore star enters the NBA Draft as expected.

Big picture

Michigan: The Wolverines proved they can compete with, and beat, the Big Ten's best teams this week. They lost by only one point at home Tuesday against No. 5 Purdue. Instead of shooting a lot of three-pointers, they are taking the ball to the basket to set up long shots and force teams to defend them all over the court.

Michigan State: The Spartans will get a five-day break before playing again and they need time to figure out what has gone relatively wrong. They had won 14 straight, ending with a 30-point win over Maryland, before a lopsided loss at Ohio State, an overtime win against Rutgers and a closely contested game against Michigan in which they often looked confused on offense and porous on defense.

"This will hurt for a day or two," Izzo said.

Roundup

No. 8 Texas Tech knocks off 2nd-ranked West Virginia

Associated Press

LUBBOCK, Texas — Keenan Evans scored 20 points, Brandone Francis had a career-high 17 and No. 8 Texas Tech won the first 17 10 matchups on its home court, beating second-ranked West Virginia 72-71 on Saturday.

Evans hit a lean-in jumper to give the Red Raiders (15-2, 4-1 Big 12) a four-point lead in the final minute and send the first sellout crowd of the season into a frenzy. The Mountaineers had their nation-leading 15-game winning streak stopped.

Jevon Carter scored 28 points — one off his career high — for West Virginia (15-2, 4-1). Esa Ahmad added 18 in his season debut following an NCAA academic suspension.

No. 1 Villanova 78, St. John's 71: Dante DiVincenzo hit six three-pointers and scored 25 points to help the Wildcats silence a rowdy crowd and hold off the upset-minded Red Storm at Madison Square Garden.

Shamorie Ponds came close to leading St. John's (10-8, 0-6 Big East) to its first win over a No. 1 team in 33 years. Ponds scored a career-high 37 points in front of 17,123 fans.



BRAD TOLLESON/AP

Texas Tech's Josh Webster (3) and Brandone Francis celebrate during the second half of Saturday's 72-71 win over West Virginia in Lubbock, Texas.

No. 5 Purdue 81, Minnesota 47: Vincent Edwards scored 25 points in 29 minutes on 9-for-14 shooting for the visiting Boiler-

makers in their 13th consecutive victory.

No. 5 Wichita State 72, Tulsa 69: Landry Shamet and back-court mate Conner Frankamp each scored 16 points and the Shockers held off the host Golden Hurricane.

No. 7 Duke 89, Wake Forest 71: Marvin Bagley III had 30 points and 11 rebounds for the host Blue Devils, who were without Hall of Fame coach Mike Krzyzewski due to a virus.

No. 9 Oklahoma 102, No. 16 TCU 97 (OT): Trae Young scored 29 of his 43 points after halftime for the host Sooners, who won in overtime.

No. 10 Xavier 92, No. 25 Creighton 70: Trevon Bluiett emerged from his shooting slump with 24 points and Kaiser Gates responded to getting dropped from the starting lineup by scoring 16, as the host Musketeers recovered from back-to-back road losses.

No. 11 Arizona State 77, Oregon State 75: Shannon Evans scored seven of his 22 points in a late 10-0 run for the host Sun Devils.

No. 12 Kansas 73, Kansas State 72: At Lawrence, Kan., Devonte Graham had 23 points,

and Malik Newman hit the go-ahead foul shot with 15 seconds left for the Jayhawks.

No. 13 Seton Hall 74, Georgetown 61: Desi Rodriguez and Myles Powell each scored 19 points to lead the host Pirates.

No. 14 Cincinnati 78, South Florida 55: Jarron Cumberland scored 18 points and the visiting Bearcats shrugged off a slow start.

No. 15 Gonzaga 75, San Francisco 65: Johnathan Williams scored 17 points and Josh Perkins added 16 to lead the Bulldogs to their 18th straight road victory in the West Coast Conference.

No. 17 Arizona 90, Oregon 83: Allonzo Trier scored 25 points and Deandre Ayton added 24 for the host Wildcats.

No. 19 Clemson 72, No. 18 Miami 63: Donté Grantham had 18 points, including four three-pointers, and Mark Donnal had 12 points, including two critical second-half thirds, for the host Tigers.

No. 20 North Carolina 69, Notre Dame 68: Joel Berry II hit two free throws with 7.1 seconds left as the Tar Heels earned their first Atlantic Coast Conference road victory of the season.

No. 21 Kentucky 74, Vanderbilt 67: Kevin Knox scored five straight points to put the visiting Wildcats ahead to stay.

No. 22 Auburn 76, Mississippi State 68: At Starkville, Miss., Bryce Brown scored 23 points and Mustapha Heron and Deshaun Murray both added 14 for the Tigers.

No. 23 Florida State 101, Syracuse 90 (2OT): Brian Angala scored 24 points, including five in the second overtime, and Christ Koumadje added a career-high 23 for the host Seminoles.

No. 24 Tennessee 75, Texas A&M 62: Jordan Bowden scored 15 points as the Volunteers handed the visiting Aggies their fifth consecutive loss.

Air Force 78, San Jose State 71: Ryan Swan scored 19 points and grabbed nine rebounds and Jacob Van added 14 points to help the Falcons beat the host Spartans.

Pervis Louder scored all of his 12 points in the second half and Layle Scottie finished with 11 for Air Force (7-40, 1-4 Mountain West). The Falcons, who had lost seven of their last eight, snapped a four-game skid.

NHL/SPORTS BRIEFS

Roundup

Danault hit in head by puck in Bruins' win

Associated Press

MONTREAL — Brad Marchand scored in the fourth round of a shootout, and the Boston Bruins beat Montreal 4-3 on Saturday night after the Canadiens lost Phillip Danault to a head injury on a frightening play in the second period.

Marchand also scored in regulation, helping the Bruins improve to 9-0-3 in their last 12 games.

Danault was taken off the ice on a stretcher after he was hit in the head by a slap shot from Bruins defenseman Zdeno Chara. The 24-year-old center was moving and speaking to medical staff before he departed to an ovation from the Bell Centre crowd.

Considering how hard Chara can shoot, many feared it might have been much worse.

Canadiens coach Claude Julien said after the game that Danault would remain in a hospital and would be re-evaluated Sunday.

"You never want to see it," Julien said. "Regardless if it's your own team or the other team, no one wants to see injuries like that."

"They always make you worry. The players are still worried about him, but the reports are good so far."

Ducks 4, Kings 2: Ondrej Kase had two goals and an assist, John Gibson made 23 saves and visiting Anaheim held on in the third period for its first victory of the season in the Freeway Faceoff.

Stars 5, Coyotes 5, OT: Joona Koskela tied it with 15:4 seconds left in the third period and Marc-Edouard Vlasic scored in overtime, lifting host San Jose over Arizona.

Penguins 4, Red Wings 1: Evgeni Malkin had two goals and two assists, and host Pittsburgh earned its third straight victory.

Flyers 5, Devils 3: Sean Couturier had two goals and an assist, helping visiting Philadelphia to its fourth straight win.

Wild 4, Jets 1: Matt Dumba scored two goals in the third period, and host Minnesota got its first win against Winnipeg in four tries this season.

Oilers 3, Golden Knights 2 (OT): Darnell Nurse scored 55 seconds into overtime to lift visiting Edmonton past Vegas.

Islanders 7, Rangers 2: At New York, Mathew Barzal had two goals and three assists, Anthony Beauverlier added two goals and an assist, and the Islanders earned their ninth win in the past 10 meetings of the cross-town rivals.

Avalanche 4, Stars 1: Alexander Kerfoot scored in the first period and assisted on Nathan MacKinnon's winner, and visiting Colorado beat Dallas for its sixth straight win.



GRAHAM HUGHES, THE CANADIAN PRESS/AP

The Canadiens' Phillip Danault is stretchered off the ice after he was hit in the head by a puck on a shot by the Bruins' Zdeno Chara during second period Saturday in Montreal, Saturday.

Scoreboard

Eastern Conference

Atlantic Division					
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts
Tampa Bay	44	31	10	3	65
Boston	41	24	10	7	55
Toronto	45	25	17	3	53
Florida	43	18	19	6	42
Detroit	42	17	18	7	41
Montreal	43	18	20	5	41
Ottawa	42	15	18	9	39
Buffalo	44	11	24	9	31

GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Washington	45	28	14	3	59	140
Columbus	46	25	18	3	53	124
New Jersey	42	22	12	8	52	102
N.Y. Rangers	43	22	16	5	49	134
Pittsburgh	45	23	19	3	49	130
Philadelphia	43	20	15	8	48	128
N.Y. Islanders	44	22	18	4	48	138
Carolina	44	20	16	8	48	125

Western Conference

Central Division					
	GP	W	L	OT	Pts
Winnipeg	46	26	13	7	59
Nashville	42	25	11	6	56
St. Louis	46	26	17	3	55
Minnesota	45	24	17	4	52
Dallas	44	24	17	3	51
Chicago	44	22	16	6	50
Colorado	42	23	16	3	49

Pacific Division					
Vegas	42	29	10	3	61
Los Angeles	43	24	14	5	53
Calgary	44	24	16	4	52
San Jose	41	22	13	6	50
Anaheim	44	20	15	9	49
Edmonton	46	20	23	3	43
Vancouver	44	17	21	6	40
Arizona	45	10	28	7	27

Note: Two points for a win, one for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild card teams advance to playoffs.

Note: Two points for a win, one point for overtime loss. Top three teams in each division and two wild cards per conference advance to playoffs.

Saturday's games
N.Y. Islanders 7, N.Y. Rangers 2
Pittsburgh 4, Detroit 1

Sunday's games
Colorado 4, Montreal 3
Philadelphia 5, New Jersey 3
Minnesota 4, Winnipeg 1

Tuesday's games
Edmonton 3, Vegas 2, OT
San Jose 6, Arizona 5, OT
Anaheim 4, Los Angeles 2

Wednesday's games
Detroit 4, Chicago 2
Calgary 4, Carolina 1
St. Louis 4, Nashville 1

Thursday's games
Vancouver at Pittsburgh
Dallas at Boston
Anaheim at Colorado

Friday's games
San Jose at Los Angeles
N.Y. Islanders at Montreal
St. Louis at Toronto

Saturday's games
Philadelphia at N.Y. Islanders
Dallas at Detroit
Vegas at Nashville
San Jose at Arizona

Sunday's games
Penguins 4, Red Wings 1
Detroit 2, Pittsburgh 1

Monday's games
Pittsburgh 1, Pittsburgh, Malkin 18 (Hagelin, Maatta), 3:01, 2, Detroit, Adam Lind (Zetterberg, Stastny), 15:36 (pp), 3, Pittsburgh, Kessel 19 (Crosby, Malkin), 16:35 (pp).

Tuesday's games
Pittsburgh 4, Pittsburgh, Malkin 19 (Kessel), 2:08.

Wednesday's games
Pittsburgh 7, Pittsburgh, Crosby 16 (Kessel, Malkin), 3:31 (pp).

Thursday's games
Pittsburgh 12-6-8-36.

Power-play opportunities—Detroit 1 of 2; Golden Knights 1 of 3.

Goals—Detroit, Howard 14-13-6 (36 shots-27 saves), Pittsburgh, 4-13-9-30 (30-29).

A-18,637 (18,387), T-2:30.

Avalanche 4, Stars 1

GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Dallas	0	1	0	1	0	1

First Period—1, Colorado, Kerfoot 11 (Korger, Girardi), 9:09.

Second Period—2, Dallas, Benn 18 (Klingberg, Radulov), 15:43.

Third Period—3, Colorado, MacKinnon 19 (Kerfoot, Zadorov), 6:33, 4, Colorado, Comeau 8 (Zadorov), 16:20, 5, Colorado, Barberio 3 (Bernier, Nemeth), 19:47 (sh).

Shots on Goal—Colorado 6-9-8-23, Dallas 0-1-1-2.

Power-play opportunities—Colorado 0 of 1; Dallas 0 of 1.

Goals—Colorado, Bernier 10-7-12 (30 shots-27 saves), Dallas, Stangor 19-12 (22-19).

A-18,532 (18,532), T-2:36.

Bruins 4, Canadiens 3 (SO)

GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Boston	1	2	0	4	0	0
Montreal	0	0	0	0	0	0

Boston won shootout 2-1.

First Period—1, Montreal, Pacioretty 11 (Mete, Danielson), 3:22, 2, Boston, Marchand 18 (Heinen, Bergeron), 17:40 (pp).

Second Period—3, Boston, DeBruin 10 (McAvoy, Chara), 2:55, 4, Montreal, Deslauriers 5, 5:45, 5, Montreal, Galchenyuk 11 (Crosby, Petry), 8:51 (pp), 6, Boston, Kerfoot 7 (DeBruin, McAvoy), 17:42.

Shootout—Boston, 2 (DeBruin, G. Pasternak, NG, McAvoy, NG, Marchand, GJ, Montreal 4 (Bryant, G. Drouin, NG, Pacioretty, NG, Galchenyuk), 11:25.

Shots on Goal—Boston 9-8-12-3-32, Montreal 9-6-10-1-29.

Power-play opportunities—Boston 1 of 1; Montreal 0 of 1.

Goals—Boston, Risk 15-8-4 (30 shots-27 saves), Montreal, Price 13-14-3 (32-29).

A-21,302 (21,288), T-2:59.

Islanders 7, Rangers 2

GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
N.Y. Islanders	2	3	2	7	0	1
N.Y. Rangers	0	1	0	1	0	1

First Period—1, N.Y. Islanders, Beauverlier 6 (Barzal, Eberle), 6:06, 2, N.Y. Rangers, Haynes 10 (Nash), 14:25 (pp), 3, N.Y. Islanders, Prince 1 (Mayfield), 16:25.

Second Period—4, N.Y. Islanders, Barzal 14 (Eberle, Mayfield), 6:27, 5, N.Y. Islanders, Barzal 15 (Eberle, Beauverlier), 6:27, 6, N.Y. Islanders, Beauverlier 7 (Hickey, Tavares), 6:51.

Third Period—7, N.Y. Islanders, Zibanejad 14 (McDonough, Zuccarello), 9:06, 8, N.Y. Islanders, Hickey 2 (Eberle, Barzal), 10:56, 9, N.Y. Islanders, Beauverlier 8 (Chimera, Barzal), 18:55.

Shots on Goal—Edmonton 14-11-12-37, N.Y. Rangers 16-10-13-39.

Power-play opportunities—N.Y. Islanders 0 of 2; N.Y. Rangers 1 of 3.

Goals—N.Y. Islanders, Halak 13-12-2 (39 shots-37 saves), Vegas, Fleury 9-10-14 (18-16), Pavelec 3-6-1 (19-14).

A-18,006 (18,006), T-2:30.

Oilers 3, Golden Knights 2 (OT)

GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Edmonton	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vegas	0	0	0	0	0	0

First Period—1, Edmonton, Maroon 11 (McDonald, Nurse), 8:01, 2, Vegas, Smith 12, 9:56, 3, Oilers, Karlsson 23 (Marchessault), 16:25.

Second Period—4, Edmonton, Cugiglia 6 (McDavid, Maroon), 3:26.

Third Period—5, Edmonton, Nurse 6 (Cagiglia, Draaisni), 0:53.

Shots on Goal—Edmonton 12-11-6-31, Vegas 16-12-13-36.

Power-play opportunities—Edmonton 0 of 3; Vegas 0 of 6.

Goals—Edmonton, Talbot 16-12-3 (36 shots-37 saves), Vegas, Fleury 9-10-14 (30-27).

A-18,351 (17,367), T-2:30.

Flyers 5, Devils 3

GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Philadelphia	1	2	2	5	0	0
New Jersey	1	1	1	3	0	0

First Period—1, New Jersey, Bratt 11 (Hall, Hirschler), 5:42, 2, Philadelphia, Couturier 24 (MacDonald, Veal), 14:35.

Second Period—3, New Jersey, Palmieri 7 (Butcher, Miller), 1:46 (pp), 4, Philadelphia, Simmonds 15 (Giroux, Voracek), 11:53 (pp), 5, Philadelphia, Couturier 25 (Provorov, Giroux), 18:16 (pp).

Third Period—5, Philadelphia, Konecny 6 (Provorov, Couturier), 4:28, 7, Philadelphia, Raffl (Fipault, Voracek), 12:04, 8, New Jersey, Stafford 6 (Severson, Moore), 15:15 (pp).

Shots on Goal—Philadelphia 6-11-8-25, New Jersey 13-5-11-29.

Power-play opportunities—Philadelphia 2 of 2; New Jersey 2 of 7.

Goals—Philadelphia, Elliott 17-10-7 (29 shots-26 saves), New Jersey, Schneider 17-9-6 (25-20).

A-15,514 (15,514), T-2:33.

Wild 4, Jets 1

GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Winnipeg	0	0	1	1	0	0
Minnesota	0	0	1	1	0	0

First Period—1, Minnesota, Granlund 13 (Suter, Spangone), 8:47 (pp).

Second Period—2, Minnesota, Zucker 16 (Kouvin, Bylund), 5:46.

Third Period—3, Winnipeg, Perreault 13 (Wheeler, Grylberg), 0:47 (pp), 4, Minnesota, Dumba 8 (Foligno, Coyte), 6:23, 5, Minnesota, Dumba 9 (Foligno, Coyte), 13:32.

Shots on Goal—Winnipeg 5-17-11-33, Minnesota 23-9-4-41.

Power-play opportunities—Winnipeg 1 of 2; Minnesota 1 of 1.

Goals—Winnipeg, Hellebuyck 23-6-6 (41 shots-37 saves), Minnesota, Dubnyk 17-9-2 (33-32).

A-19,207 (18,064), T-2:26.

Ducks 4, Kings 2

GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Anaheim	2	0	2	4	0	0
Los Angeles	0	0	2	0	0	0

First Period—1, Anaheim, Kase 10 (Geralt, Rakell), 6:14, 2, Anaheim, Kester 2 (Kase, Montour), 18:50 (pp).

Second Period—2, Anaheim, Kase 11 (Ritchie), 2:10, 4, Los Angeles, Shore 3 (Foligno, Lewis), 8:23, 5, Los Angeles, Kopitar 18 (Tafel, Fordhoth), 13:46, 6, Anaheim, Pieri (Lindholm), 18:32.

Third Period—4, Anaheim 5-7-10-22, Los Angeles 7-8-10-25.

Shots on Goal—Anaheim 14-13-25 (25 shots-23 saves), Los Angeles, Quick 19-12 (31-18).

A-14,443 (18,230), T-2:26.

Sharks 6, Coyotes 5 (OT)

GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA
Arizona	0	0	1	0	0	0
San Jose	3	1	1	6	0	0

First Period—1, San Jose, Thornton 9 (Pavelski), 5:53, 2, Arizona, Stepan 5 (Pavelski, Perlini), 8:01, 3, San Jose, Pavelski 9 (Burns, Thornton), 10:01 (pp), 4, Arizona, Goligoski 5 (Stepan), 12:16, 5, San Jose, Couture 17 (Burns, Donaldson), 13:37, 6, Arizona, Fischer 12 (Constrator), 14:01.

Second Period—7, San Jose, Donaldson 9 (Dell, Boudrier), 17:07.

Third Period—8, Arizona, Ekman-Larsen 7 (Chabot, Dvorak), 3:31, 3, Arizona, Archibald 3 (Chabot, Dvorak), 6:22, 10, San Jose, Donaldson 10 (Burns, Tierney), 15:44.

Shots on Goal—San Jose, Vlasov 5 (Pavelski, Thornton), 2:42.

Power-play opportunities—Arizona 0 of 1; San Jose 9-5-7-21, San Jose 16-11-13-4-44.

Goals—Arizona, Wedgewood 4-7-4 (15-13), Jones 13-10-4 (6-3).

A-17,562 (17,562), T-2:36.

Briefly

Astrons acquire P Cole

Associated Press

HOUSTON — The Houston Astros already had two Cy Young winners on their staff. They're hoping Gerrit Cole can make it three.

The World Series champions boosted their rotation with another big arm, acquiring Cole from the Pittsburgh Pirates in a five-player trade Saturday.

The Pirates got right-handed Joe Musgrove and Michael Feliz, third baseman Colin Moran and outfielder Jason Martin for their 27-year-old ace.

Cole will join All-Stars Dallas Keuchel and Justin Verlander on a team that just won its first crown. Houston breezed to the AL West title with 101 wins, and went on to beat the Los Angeles Dodgers in Game 7 of the World Series.

Cole went 12-12 with a 4.26 ERA in his five seasons with the Pirates. No 1 overall pick in the 2011 draft was an All-Star in 2015 but hasn't replicated those results the past two seasons. Astros general manager Jeff Luhnow thinks pitching coach Bret Strom can help Cole reach his potential.

"We expect him to bounce back and be a Cy Young contender," Luhnow said.

Cole tied for the NL lead with 33 starts, was third in innings (203) and 10th in strikeouts (196). He is 59-42 with a 3.50 ERA in his past two seasons, including 19-8 in 2015.

Gibbs, Evans picked as US bobsled pushers

Lauren Gibbs and Aja Evans were picked Saturday as the pushers of the U.S. bobsled team that will join pilots Elena Meyers Taylor and Jamie Greubel Poser on the U.S. Olympic women's bobsled team.

Gibbs will be in Meyers Taylor's sled at the Pyeongchang Games. Evans will be in Greubel Poser's combination that earned the U.S. a bronze medal at the Sochi Games four years ago.

"We don't take this decision lightly," said U.S. Bobsled and Skeleton CEO Darrin Stebeles. "We chose a combination that we think have the best chance of bringing home hardware from Korea for Team USA."

NFL PLAYOFFS



MATT ROURKE/AP

Eagles quarterback Nick Foles, left, prepares to pass during the first half of Saturday's divisional playoff game against the Falcons in Philadelphia. The Eagles won 15-10.

Eagles defy oddsmakers

By ROB MAADDI
Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Nick Foles was steady, Jake Elliott had a big leg and the defense made one final stop.

The underdog Philadelphia Eagles are heading to the NFC championship game following a 15-10 victory over the Atlanta Falcons on Saturday. They'll host the Saints-Vikings winner next Sunday.

Despite going 13-3 to earn the No. 1 seed, the Eagles entered the game as 3-point underdogs against the sixth-seeded Falcons (11-7). They used it as motivation and now it's onto the next one as they continue pursuit of the franchise's first Super Bowl title.

"If we believe the outsiders, we will be all messed up," Pro Bowl defensive tackle Fletcher Cox said. "We went out and proved we can be the real winning team."

Matt Ryan's final pass sailed through Julio Jones' arms in the corner of the end zone as Jalen Mills had tight coverage on fourth down from the 2 to secure Philadelphia's win. It was another disappointing finish for the Falcons, who blew a 25-point lead against the Patriots in last year's Super Bowl.

"The reason I play this game is to win a championship," Ryan said. "That's why we put all of the hard work we put in. When you don't get that result, it's difficult."

Foles outplayed Ryan, bouncing back from a pair of subpar games with an efficient performance. He completed 77 percent of his passes (23-for-30) for 246 yards, no touchdowns and no turnovers.

"The biggest thing in our locker room is that we believe in one another and that showed," Foles said. "We kept working, kept grinding, had faith in one another. In any sport there's going to be criticism. You're aware of it because you're human but we



MICHAEL PEREZ/AP

Philadelphia Eagles kicker Jake Elliott made three field goals, including one from 53 yards at the end of the first half.

blocked it out."

Here's some things we learned following Philadelphia's first playoff win in nine years:

Overcoming turnovers: The Eagles committed the only two turnovers and won anyway. Jay Ajayi fumbled on the second play from scrimmage inside Falcons territory and a short punt bounced off an Eagles player setting up Atlanta's 18-yard touchdown drive.

Inconsistent offense: These weren't the Falcons who lit up the scoreboard on their way to winning the NFC championship last year. Under first-year offensive coordinator Steve Sarkisian, the Falcons weren't quite as sharp throughout the season and their inconsistency showed up at the wrong time. They were shut out in the second half and held to just 118 yards in the final two quarters.

"I think that's something we

have to look at and evaluate this offseason," Ryan said. "There were too many times we were a little bit inconsistent."

Jay train: Ajayi shook off the fumble and ran well until he inexplicably went to the bench for a long stretch. Ajayi had 50 yards rushing on eight carries through Philadelphia's first drive of the second quarter, but didn't get the ball again until the second half. He finished with 54 yards on 15 carries and also dropped a third down pass. He did have 44 yards receiving on three catches.

"I feel like I played poorly," Ajayi said. "The fumble, can't do that in a big game. I feel like I could have executed a lot better. A lot of the teammates picked up the slack. The defense played lights out."

Call of the game: Eagles coach Doug Pederson ran an inside counter to wide receiver Nelson Agholor that went for 21 yards to the Falcons 3 on third-and-3 on Philadelphia's touchdown drive. It was the first time he called that play this season.

"It's a play we've had in our arsenal, but never got to it," Pederson said. "This was just an opportunity to put it in Nelson's hands with Lane Johnson as a puller and just executed extremely well."

Jake's leg: Elliott, who joined the Eagles after Caleb Sturgis was injured in Week 1, bounced back after missing his fourth extra point of the season by connecting on all three of his field goals. His 53-yarder at the end of the first half was his sixth in seven tries from beyond 50. That includes a game-winning 61-yarder against the Giants in Week 3.

"It was definitely tricky out there, just really gusty (wind)," Elliott said. "You don't know what it's really going to do out there so you just have to hit the best ball you can and take care of what you can control."

Sputtering offense costly for Falcons

By BARRY WILNER
Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — The Atlanta Falcons nearly won a Super Bowl a year ago behind the NFL's most potent offense.

It was that side of the ball that ended their chances to get to the big game again.

Atlanta managed only 10 first-half points, both coming off Philadelphia turnovers, and lost 15-10 to the Eagles on Saturday. While Philadelphia advances to the NFC championship game, the Falcons (11-7) go home.

"I think that's certainly something that we have to look at and evaluate this offseason," Matt Ryan said after concluding a somewhat down season for him in the wake of his 2016 league MVP campaign. "There were too many times that we were a little bit inconsistent."

That was exemplified against the Eagles (14-3), who like the Falcons sputtered in the red zone. But Philly got three field goals from Jake Elliott and a touchdown run from LeGarrette Blount.

Most damaging for Atlanta was how it came up empty deep in Eagles territory on its final drive. The Falcons had first-and-goal at the 9, and got to the 2 on fourth down before Ryan's pass to Julio Jones soared over his head in the end zone.

"Certainly in those situations you want to go to your best players," Ryan explained. "You know, obviously rolled to the right and had an opportunity to Julio. It just didn't work out and that's disappointing."

Atlanta was the NFL's highest-scoring team last season, but its lowest production was in a 24-15 defeat to the Eagles. The offense wasn't nearly as productive this season, falling to 15th, from 33.8 points a game to 22.1.

The Falcons didn't come close to their season's average, or to the 26 they put on the board in

beating the Rams in a wild-card matchup last weekend.

So while the defense was vastly improved, particularly in the pass rush, the Falcons fell flat with the ball far too many times.

"That's one of the areas we are dialed in from the beginning of the season to where how we make sure those aren't field goals and they turn into touchdowns," coach Dan Quinn said. "Was there plays that knocked us out? Could we have done better in the run game down there?"

"Those are certainly topics we are going to look long and deep into."

Star receiver Jones had a strong game with nine receptions for 101 yards. He was targeted 16 times.

But he couldn't get free downfield, except for a 20-yard reception on fourth down on the final drive. For the Falcons to be Super Bowl threats down the road, Jones must be nearly unstoppable.

Atlanta's running game was spotty against the Eagles, too. Several times, Tevin Coleman had open lanes and got nice gains. On other plays, he and Devonta Freeman didn't have an inch to run when Ryan handed off.

Coleman, usually the backup, had 79 yards on 10 carries, with a long of 23. Freeman had only 7 yards on his 11 carries.

In contrast, the Eagles ran for 96 yards and had several big plays on the ground.

Now, the Falcons must cope with a much earlier and nearly as dramatic defeat as what they sustained last February.

"It's difficult when you get to the playoffs and you've put in all the work throughout the year," Ryan said. "You're in a competitive game like tonight. There's a lot of back and forth. It's disappointing to not get the outcome that you want."

"The finality of it sometimes is difficult, so we're disappointed for sure."



CURTIS COMPTON, ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION/AP

The Falcons' Julio Jones can't make the catch on a fourth-down pass in the end zone as Philadelphia Eagles' Jalen Mills defends.

NFL PLAYOFFS

Scoreboard

Playoffs

Wild-card Playoffs

Saturday, Jan. 6
Tennessee 22, Kansas City 21
Atlanta 26, Los Angeles Rams 13

Divisional Playoffs

Sunday, Jan. 7
Jacksonville 10, Buffalo 3
New Orleans 31, Carolina 26
Philadelphia 15, Pittsburgh 14
Jacksonville at Pittsburgh
New Orleans at Minnesota

Conference Championships

Sunday, Jan. 21

AFC

Jacksonville-Pittsburgh winner at New England

NFC

New Orleans-Minnesota winner at Philadelphia

Pro Bowl

Sunday, Jan. 28

At Orlando, Fla.

Super Bowl

Sunday, Feb. 4

At Minneapolis

AFC champion vs. NFC champion

Saturday

Patriots 35, Titans 7

Tennessee 7 0 0 7-14
New England 0 21 7 7-35

First Quarter

Ten—Davis 15 pass from Mariota (Succop Kick), 1:14

Second Quarter

NE—White 5 pass from Brady (Gostkowski Kick), 12:22

NE—White 6 run (Gostkowski Kick), 9:20

NE—Hogan 4 pass from Brady (Gostkowski Kick), 1:52

Third Quarter

NE—Balden 2 run (Gostkowski Kick), 4:02

Fourth Quarter

NE—Gronkowski 4 pass from Brady (Gostkowski Kick), 10:22

Ten—Davis 11 pass from Mariota (Succop Kick), 1:55

NE—White 6 run (Gostkowski Kick), 8:52

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Patriots cruise into AFC title game

By KYLE HIGHTOWER

Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — The New England Patriots have handled every bit of adversity that has been thrown at them this season — from a string of injuries to the recent off-field firestorm created by reports of purported discord within the core of the franchise.

Now, they'll have a chance to play for yet another AFC championship.

The Patriots' 35-14 victory over the Titans in Saturday's divisional round was yet another reminder of the defending Super Bowl champion's unique ability to not only compartmentalize, but play some of their best football in the face of it.

Tom Brady chuckled when he was asked after the game about his name being mentioned in a swirl of media reports last week about alleged bickering between himself, coach Bill Belichick and team owner Robert Kraft. "Noooo," he responded sarcastically, when a reporter asked about Brady's name being mentioned in a negative light.

But Brady said it "just goes with the territory."

"I just try to be consistent, show up and do the best I can do every week for the team and regardless of whether I'm the worst quarterback in the league or somewhere in-between," he said.

It was Brady's 10th career postseason game with at least three TD tosses, moving him past Joe Montana for the most in NFL history. It also brought out some of the best football in his teammates.

James White caught a touchdown pass and ran for another, and Danny Amendola had 11 catches for 112 yards — his first

career 100-yard receiving game. "All the hard work we put in is for these moments," White said. "We have to make the most of these opportunities."

Marcus Mariota tossed an early touchdown pass to give the Titans an early 7-0 lead. But Tennessee faltered down the stretch as the Patriots defense swarmed the third-year quarterback and sacked him a Patriots playoff-record eight times.

Titans coach Mike Mularkey revealed after the game that Mariota suffered a strained quadriceps muscle in the first quarter. But Mariota said it was no excuse.

"Everybody plays with something," he said.

He said he walked off the field feeling "embarrassed" a week after leading his team back from 18 points down against Kansas City. But he said watching the efficiency of Brady and the Patriots was a learning experience he will take with him moving forward.

"You don't play to come and lose in the divisional playoff. You play to win the whole thing," Mariota said. "Obviously, this is the blueprint New England's been in the playoffs consistently. We can learn a lot from them."

Familiar position: Brady will be making his 12th AFC championship game appearance in his 18 NFL seasons. He now has 221 career wins as a starting quarterback (regular season and playoffs), extending his NFL record. Peyton Manning is next with 200 career victories.

Rare company: Gronkowski finished with six catches for 81 yards and a touchdown. It was his 10th career postseason TD. He's tied with five others for third all-time. But it's the most for a tight end. Only two players in NFL history have more receiving touchdowns



MICHAEL DWYER/AP

Titans safety Kevin Byard tackles Patriots tight end Rob Gronkowski after a reception during the first half Saturday in Foxborough, Mass.

in the playoffs: Jerry Rice with 22 and John Stallworth with 12.

But Gronkowski said it's not something that is even registering right now.

"That's great to hear and everything, but that's not really the main goal," he said. "Maybe down the road you can look back and look at that stuff, but as of right now, what our main goal is just keep on grinding, get the win and that's what we did tonight."

Hard critique: The Patriots feasted on third down against the

Titans' defense, going 11-for-17 in those situations.

Titans safety Kevin Byard said they allowed Brady to control the game.

"We didn't play well enough to give our offense a chance," Byard said. "We were giving up too much, especially on early downs."

He said New England's 31 first downs stood out.

"[Brady] definitely outplayed us tonight."

Mariota 'embarrassed' by Titans' efforts

Eagles 15, Falcons 10

Atlanta 7 0 0 0-10
Philadelphia 0 9 3 3-15

First Quarter

Atl—FG Bryant 33, 9:04

Second Quarter

Phi—Blount 1 run (Clemens Kick), 10:28

Atl—Freeman 6 pass from Ryan (Bryant Kick), 5:41

Third Quarter

Phi—FG Elliott 53, 0:00

Fourth Quarter

Phi—FG Elliott 37, 11:14

Atl—FG Elliott 21, 6:02

A—69, 5:59

Phi—FG Elliott 37, 11:14

Atl—FG Elliott 21, 6:02

A—69, 5:59

Phi—FG Elliott 37, 11:14

Atl—FG Elliott 21, 6:02

A—69, 5:59

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Atl—FG Elliott 21, 6:02

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Atl—FG Elliott 21, 6:02

A—69, 5:59

Phi—FG Elliott 37, 11:14

Atl—FG Elliott 21, 6:02

A—69, 5:59

Phi—FG Elliott 37, 11:14

Atl—FG Elliott 21, 6:02

By JIMMY GOLEN

Associated Press

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. — Marcus Mariota threw for a touchdown to give the Tennessee Titans an early lead, and had another TD pass that was the final score of the game.

In between, he spent a lot of time trying to limp away from the New England Patriots rush.

One week after leading the Titans to victory in his first career playoff game, Mariota took his first postseason loss — and took it hard — absorbing eight sacks while the Patriots scored five touchdowns in a row on their way to a 35-14 victory in the AFC divisional round Saturday night.

"Man, embarrassed," said Mariota, who sustained what coach Mike Mularkey said was a strained quadriceps muscle in the first quarter and went 14 minutes between scores.

"It felt like the momentum was on our side" after a 15-yard pass to Corey Davis gave the Titans a 7-0 lead, Mariota said. "They're a team that's been here before, and they didn't blink an eye. They just stuck to their game plan and won."

Just two seasons after going 3-13 when Mariota was a rookie, the Titans (10-8) reached the



STEVEN SENNE/AP

Titans quarterback Marcus Mariota gets up from the turf after being sacked during the second half Saturday.

playoffs for the first time since 2008. Last week, they earned their first postseason victory in 14 years, rallying from a 21-3 halftime deficit to beat Kansas City in the wild-card round.

Against the defending Super Bowl champions, the two-touchdown underdogs jumped out to a surprising early lead but still trailed 21-7 at the half.

"We saw what happened last week in Kansas City, when Kansas City had a lead at the half similar to the one that we had," Patriots coach Bill Belichick said. "Our guys did a real

good job of kind of keeping their foot on the gas and keep pressing it."

Mularkey said Mariota's leg prevented him from scrambling away from the New England rush. The Patriots sacked him four times in the third quarter — including back-to-back plays that left Tennessee with a third-and-31 from their own 2 — and three more in the fourth.

"They did a good job with the line game," Mularkey said. "Marcus was hampered. Tough to get away."

Mariota completed 22 of 37 passes for 254 yards and two touchdowns in the game, both of them to Davis. He also ran four times for 37 yards.

"Obviously, this is the blueprint," Mariota said. "New England has been in the playoffs consistently. They've won a bunch of championships and we can learn a lot from this, and I think we will."

The Titans also committed 10 penalties in the game after a season in which they had the second-fewest in the NFL. One of the calls was for an offense that allowed the Patriots to avoid punting from their own end zone; they went on to score and extend the lead to 21-7.

"You can't make those mistakes against a really good team that's waiting for you to do it," said Mularkey, whose job was reportedly in jeopardy even after reaching the playoffs.

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Wolverine attack

Wagner leads upset of No. 4 Spartans » College basketball, Page 28



Brady, top-ranked Pats
rout Titans to return
to AFC title game

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Patriots quarterback
Tom Brady celebrates
a touchdown Saturday.

CHARLES KRUPA/AP



ONE NIGHT

The Eagles' Brent Celek reacts
during the Eagles' 15-10 victory
over the Falcons on Saturday.

MICHAEL PEREZ/AP

No. 1 Eagles hold off
Falcons, silence doubters

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